

# Genesis

# INTRODUCTION

Appropriately has Genesis been termed “the seed plot of the Bible,” for in it we have, in germ form, almost all of the great doctrines which are afterwards fully developed in the books of Scripture which follow.

In Genesis *God is revealed* as the Creator-God, as the Covenant-God, as the Almighty-God, as well as “the Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth.”

In Genesis we have the first hint of *the Blessed Trinity*, of a plurality of Persons in the Godhead – “Let us make man in our image” (1:26).

In Genesis *man* is exhibited. First as the creature of God’s hands, then as a fallen and sinful being, and later as one who is brought back to God, finding grace in His sight (6:8), walking with God (6:9), made “the friend of God” (James 2:23).

In Genesis the *wiles of Satan* are exposed. We “are not ignorant of his devices,” for here the Holy Spirit has fully uncovered them. The realm in which the arch-enemy works is not the moral but the spiritual. He calls into question the Word of God, casts doubt on its integrity, denies its veracity.

In Genesis the truth of *sovereign election* is first exhibited. God singles out Abraham from an idolatrous people, and makes him the father of the chosen Nation. God passes by Ishmael and calls Isaac.

In Genesis the truth of *salvation* is typically displayed. Our fallen first parents are clothed by God Himself, clothed with skins: to procure those skins death had to come in, blood must be shed, the innocent was slain in the stead of the guilty. Only *thus* could man’s shame be covered, and only *thus* could the sinner be fitted to stand before the thrice holy God.

In Genesis the truth of *justification by faith* is first made known: “And he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness” (15:6). Abraham believed God: not Abraham obeyed God, or loved God, or served God; but Abraham *believed* God. And it was counted unto him for (not instead of, but *unto*) righteousness. Then, if righteousness was “counted” unto Abraham, he had *none of his own*. Believing God, righteousness was reckoned to Abraham’s account.

In Genesis *the believer’s security* is strikingly illustrated. The flood of Divine judgment descends on the earth, and swallows up all its guilty inhabitants. But Noah, who had found grace in the eyes of the Lord, was safely preserved in the ark, into which God had shut him.

In Genesis the truth of *separation* is clearly inculcated. Enoch’s lot was cast in days wherein evil abounded, but he lived apart from the world, walking with God. Abraham was called upon to separate himself from idolatrous Chaldea, and to step out upon the promises of God. Lot is held up before us as a solemn example of the direful consequences of being unequally yoked with unbelievers, and of having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.

In Genesis God’s *disciplinary chastisements* upon an erring believer are portrayed. Jacob is the standing example of what happens to a child of God who walks after the flesh, instead of after the spirit. But in the end we are shown how Divine grace triumphs over human frailty.

In Genesis we are shown the importance and value of *prayer*. Abraham prayed unto God and Abimelech’s life was spared (20:17). Abraham’s servant cries to the Lord that God would prosper his efforts to secure a wife for Isaac, and God answered his petition (chap. 24). Jacob, too, prays, and God harkened.

In Genesis *the saint’s rapture to heaven* is vividly portrayed. Enoch, the man who walked with God, “was not,” for God had translated him. He did not pass through the portals of death. He was suddenly removed from these scenes of sin and suffering and transported into the realm of glory without seeing death.

In Genesis the *divine incarnation* is first declared. The Coming One was to be supernaturally begotten. He was to enter this world as none other ever did. He was to be the Son of Man, and yet have no human father. The One who should bruise the serpent’s head was to be the *woman’s* “Seed.”

In Genesis the *death and resurrection* of the Savior are strikingly foreshadowed. The ark, in which were preserved Noah and his family, were brought safely through the deluge of death on the new earth. Isaac, the beloved son of Abraham, at the bidding of his father, is laid, unresistingly, on the altar, and from it Abraham “received him back as in a figure from the dead.”

In Genesis we also learn of the *Savior’s coming exaltation*. This is strikingly typified in the history of Joseph – the most complete of all the personal types of Christ – who, after a period of humiliation and suffering was exalted to be the governor over all Egypt. Jacob, too, on his death bed, also declares of Shiloh that “unto Him shall the gathering of the peoples be” (49:10). In Genesis the *priesthood* of Christ is anticipated. The Lord Jesus is a Priest not of the Aaronic system, but “after the order of Melchizedek.” And it is in Genesis that this mysterious character, who received tithes from and blessed Abraham, is brought before our view. In Genesis the coming *Antichrist* is announced, announced as “the seed of the serpent” (3:15). He is seen, too, foreshadowed in the person and history of Nimrod, the rebel against the Lord, the man who headed the first great federation in open opposition to the Most High.

In Genesis we first read of God *giving Palestine* to Abraham and to his seed: “And the Lord appeared unto Abraham, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land” (12:7). And again, “For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever” (13:15).

In Genesis *the wondrous future of Israel* is made known. "And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered" (13:16). "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (22:18). In Genesis the *judgment of God on the wicked* is solemnly exhibited. Cain confesses his punishment is greater than he can bear. The flood comes on the world of the ungodly and sweeps them all away. Fire and brimstone descend on Sodom and Gomorrah, till naught but their ashes remain. Lot's wife, for one act of disobedience, is turned into a pillar of salt. What a marvelous proof is all this of the Divine Authorship! Who but the One who knows the end from the beginning, could have embodied, in germ form, what is afterwards expanded and amplified in the rest of the Bible? What unequivocal demonstration that there was One super, intending *mind*, directing the pens of all who wrote the later books of Holy Scripture! May the blessing of God rest upon us as we seek to enjoy some of the inexhaustible riches of this book of beginnings.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

## Genesis 1:1

“In the beginning God.” *This is the foundation truth of all real theology.* God is the great Originator and Initiator. It is the ignoring of this which is the basic error in all human schemes. False systems of theology and philosophy begin with man, and seek to work up to God. But this is a turning of things upside down. We must, in all our thinking, begin with God, and work down to man. Again, this is true of *the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures*. The Bible is couched in human language; it is addressed to human ears; it is written by human hands, but, in the beginning *God* – “holy men of God spake, moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:21). This is also true of *salvation*. In Eden, Adam sinned, and brought in death; but his Maker was not taken by surprise: in the beginning God had provided for just such an emergency, for, “the Lamb” was “foreordained before the foundation of the world” (1 Pet. 1:20). This is also true of *the new creation*. The soul that is saved, repents, believes, and serves the Lord; but, in the beginning, God chose us in Christ (Eph. 1:4), and now, “we love Him, because He *first* loved us.”

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

### **State the difference between man’s creative ability and God’s.**

Gen. 1:1-30 Ex. 20:11 Job 38:4-7, 36 Eccl. 7:13,14, 29 Rom. 11:33-36

## Genesis 1:2-5

At first, as in the physical creation, your heart and life may seem to be “without form and void.” Do not be discouraged. The Spirit of God is within you, brooding amid the darkness, and presently his Light will shine through. It is the blessed presence of the Lord Jesus that stirs in your heart and will presently rule our life (John 1:4). His presence divides good from evil. You must distinguish between Christ and self. Follow the gleam and you shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life. God’s days begin in evenings, and always end in mornings.

(Through the Bible Day by Day, F. B. Meyer)

We are told in Gen. 1:2 that “the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep.” Then when the Spirit moved on the face of the waters God said, “Let there be light.” It is quite a miracle to form this present earth from one that “was without form and void,” and it is yet another amazing miracle to take those “who were dead in trespasses and sins” (Eph. 2:1) and bring them to true life. **Must the Spirit come into our life before we see the Light? Do you think creating the earth, or creating us was more important to God? Or, could it be that the one prepared, or was the forerunner, for the other? In attempting to answer these questions, one final question comes to mind, how much does God love us?**

Gen. 1:3 Prov. 8:17-36 Isa. 40:22-23, 25-26 Isa. 41:4 Isa. 45:5-7 Luke 2:9 John 14:23 John  
15:13 John 19:28-30 James 1:18 1 Pet. 1:23-25 2 Pet. 1:3-4

## Genesis 1:6-25

Creation reveals God’s nature, as the picture reveals the artist. His eternal power and Godhead are visible in His works. See Rom. 1:20. And all things and beings were made through Jesus Christ (Col. 1:15, 16). The hands of the Son of God wove the blue curtains above us and filled them with luminaries. The seas are His; He made them and filled them with living creatures. The woodlands are the outcome of His mind, and He filled them with flowers and birds. He taught them to live without worry. He filled the tiny heart of the mother bird with love for her young. His are the cattle on a thousand hills.

(Through the Bible Day by Day, F. B. Meyer)

**Bring out more fully the creation theory, using this analogy: God the Father is the Great Architect, the Son willingly and completely carried out His plan, and the Holy Spirit continually gives Life to it.**

Gen. 1:2 Gen. 1:26-27 John 1:3 Heb. 1:1-10

**By using the same analogy as above, describe in your own words how God does His redemptive work of saving man from his sins and sin nature, and prepares him for an eternal life with the Godhead in eternity. Could eternal life be planned without reconciliation to a Holy God?**

John 14:6 Rom. 5:12-21 Rom. 6:1-10 1 Cor. 2:14-16 1 Cor. 3:16-17

## Genesis 1:26-31

It should be seen as if this were the work which He longed to be at; as if He had said, "Having at last settled the preliminaries, let us now apply ourselves to the business, *Let us make man.*" Man was to be a creature different from all that had been hitherto made. Flesh and spirit, heaven and earth, must be put together in him, and he must be allied to both worlds. And therefore God himself not only undertakes to make him, but is pleased so to express Himself as if He called a council to consider of the making of him: *Let us make man.* The three persons of the Trinity, Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost, consult about it and concur in it, because man, when he was made, was to be dedicated and devoted to Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost. Into that great name we are, with good reason, baptized, for to that great name we owe our being. Let Him rule man who said, *Let us make man.*

That man was made in God's image and after His likeness, two words to express the same thing and making each other the more expressive; *image* and *likeness* denote the likeliest image, the nearest resemblance of any of the visible creatures. Man was not made in the likeness of any creature that went before him, but in the likeness of his Creator; yet still between God and man there is an infinite distance. Christ only is the *express* image of God's person, as the Son of his Father, having the same nature. It is only some of God's honor that is put upon man, who is God's image only as the shadow in the glass, or the king's impress upon the coin.

(Matthew Henry's Commentary, Matthew Henry)

**What is the essential difference between the beasts of the field and human beings? And why, do you think, God chose to have that difference?**

Ecc. 7:29 1 Cor. 2:13-16 2 Cor. 2:14-17 Eph. 4:24 Col. 3:10

Genesis 1:26-28 tells us that God made man in His image as an all-important beginning point. **And since He made them as male and female, does this speak to His desire to have community and family? Do you also think He knew we would rebel and sin against Him—yet even with this knowledge, He was prepared for that as well? (Give Scripture if you can.)**

### **Genesis 2:1-7**

The commencement of the kingdom of grace is in the sanctification of the Sabbath day, v. 3. He rested on that day, and took [self-satisfaction] in His creatures, and then sanctified it, and appointed us, on that day, to rest and take [self-satisfaction] in the Creator; and His rest is, in the fourth commandment, made a reason for ours, after six days' labor.

(Matthew Henry's Commentary, Matthew Henry)

**Express in your own words what God's intentions were for mankind with regard to the Sabbath, and to His being their great spiritual King.**

Ex. 20:11 Ex. 31:13, 17 Matt. 11:28 Col. 2:16, 17 Heb. 4:1-16

### **Genesis 2:8-17**

The first tree was *pleasant to the eyes*. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat" (Gen. 3:6). Exactly in what this "pleasantness" consisted we do not know, but the Divine record seems to indicate that this tree was an object of beauty and delight. What a contrast from the second tree! Here everything was hideous and repellent. The suffering Savior, the vulgar crowd, the taunting priests, the two thieves, the flowing blood, the three-hour darkness—nothing was there to please the outward eye. The first tree was "pleasant to the eyes," but concerning the One on the second tree it is written, "They saw in Him *no beauty* that they should desire Him."

God *forbade* man to eat of the first tree. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt *not* eat of it" (Gen. 2:17). A divine prohibition was placed upon the fruit of this tree. But again, how different from the second tree! How startling the contrast! There is no restriction here. In this case man is freely *invited* to draw near and eat of the fruit of this tree. The sinner is bidden to "Taste and see that the Lord is good." "All things are ready, Come." The position is exactly reversed. Just as man was commanded *not* to eat of the fruit of the first tree, he is *now* commanded to eat of the second.

Because God forbade man to eat of the first tree, Satan used every artifice to get man *to eat of it*. Contrariwise, because God now invites men to eat of the second tree, Satan uses all his powers *to prevent men eating of it*. Is not this another designed contrast marked out for us by the Holy Spirit? Humanly speaking it was solely due to the cunning and malice of the great enemy of God and man that our first parents ate of the forbidden fruit, and can we not also say, that it is now primarily due to the subtle devices of the old serpent the Devil that sinners are kept from eating the fruit of that second tree?

The eating of the first tree brought *sin and death* "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). It was through eating of the fruit of this tree that the Curse descended upon our race with all its miseries. By eating of the second Tree *comes life and salvation*. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso, eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life" (John 6:53, 54). Is there not in these words of our Lord a latent reference to the history of man's fall, and a designed contrast from the first tree? Just as by the act of "eating" man lost his spiritual life, so by an act of "eating" man now obtains spiritual and eternal life!

Adam, the thief, through eating of the first tree, was *turned out of Paradise*, while the repentant thief through eating of the second Tree, *entered Paradise*. We doubt not that once again there is a designed antithesis in these two things. A thief is connected with both trees, for in eating of the forbidden fruit our first parents committed an act of theft. Is it not then something more than a coincidence that we find a "thief" (yea, two thieves) connected with the second Tree also? And when we note the widely different experiences of the two thieves the point is even more striking. As we have said one was cast out of Paradise (the garden), the other was admitted into Paradise, and to say the least, it is remarkable that our Lord should employ the word "Paradise" in this connection—the only time He ever did!

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

God definitely forbade man to eat of the first tree—that of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:17). Satan, of course, in his cunning and wickedness persuaded them to do so, and in consequence, due to their sinning, they were banned from the Garden. However, God in His mercy, had another Tree planned. **Where the first one brought sin and death, God has another Tree of Life that brings \_\_\_\_\_ (John 6:53, 54). What is God's great Second Tree, the Tree of Life?**

Gen. 3:22, 24    John 19:17-18    Acts 5:30    Acts 10:39    1 Pet. 2:24    Rev. 2:7    Rev. 22:2

### **Genesis 2:18-25**

The relation of the Church to Christ is unfolded in the exquisite figure of Eve's creation from the body of Adam, and then her marriage to the man from whom she had been taken. So the Church is born of Christ, and then wedded to Christ. So also the individual soul is taken from His very life and nature and given back to Him in eternal betrothal and perfect spiritual union.

This is one of the great mysteries of the gospel, which will reach at length its consummation in the marriage of the Lamb. Christ is the Husband of the Church and the Head of the body. "Just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless . . . For we are members of his body" (Ephesians 5:25-27,30).

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

**Why did God instruct man to: "leave his father and mother, and be joined to his wife, and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24)?**

**How does marriage picture God's relationship to His people?**

Hos. 2:14-23    Eph. 5:22-32

### **Overview of Genesis 3**

The third chapter in Genesis is one of the most important in all the Word of God. What has often been said of Genesis as a whole is peculiarly true of this chapter: it is the "seed-plot of the Bible." Here are the foundations upon which rest many of the cardinal doctrines of our faith. Here we trace back to their source many of the rivers of divine truth. Here commences the great drama which is being enacted on the stage of human history, and which well-nigh six thousand years has not yet completed. Here we find the Divine explanation of the present fallen and ruined condition of our race. Here we learn of the subtle devices of our enemy, the Devil. Here we behold the utter powerlessness of man to walk in the path of righteousness when divine grace is withheld from him. Here we discover the spiritual effects of sin – man seeking to flee from God. Here we discern the attitude of God toward the guilty sinner. Here we mark the universal tendency of human nature to cover its own moral shame by a device of man's own handiwork. Here we are taught of the gracious provision which God has made to meet our great need. Here begins that marvelous stream of prophecy which runs all through the Holy Scriptures. Here we learn that man cannot approach God except through a mediator.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

## Genesis 3:1-6

Here for the first time in Scripture we meet with that mysterious personage the Devil. He is introduced without any word of explanation concerning his previous history. For our knowledge of his creation, his pre-Adamic existence, the exalted position which he occupied, and his terrible fall from it, we are dependent upon other passages, notably Isaiah 14:12-15, and Ezekiel 28:12-19. In the chapter now before us we are taught several important lessons respecting our great Adversary. We learn what is the sphere of his activities, what the method of his approach and what the form of his temptations. And here also we learn of the certainty of his ultimate overthrow and destruction.

Contrary to the popular conception, which makes Satan the author of the grosser sins of the flesh, and which attributes to him that which our Lord plainly declared issues out of the human heart, we are here informed that the sphere of his operations is the religious or spiritual realm. His chief aim is to get between the soul and God, to estrange man's heart from his Maker and inspire confidence instead, in himself. He seeks to usurp the place of the Most High to make His creatures his own willing subjects and children. His work consists of substituting his own lies in the place of divine truth. Genesis 3 gives us a sample of his operations and the method he employs. These things are written for our learning, for his activities, and the realm in which he works are the same today as they were in the Garden of Eden.

The method of Satan's approach was the same then as it is now. "Yea, hath God said?" He begins by throwing doubt on the Divine Word! He questions its veracity. He suggests that God did not mean what He had said. So it is today. Every effort that is being made to deny the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures, every attempt put forward to set aside their absolute authority, every attack on the Bible which we now witness in the name of scholarship, is only a repetition of this ancient question, "Yea, hath God said?" Next, he substitutes his own word for God's, "Ye shall not surely die." We see the same principle illustrated in the first two parables in Matthew 13. The Lord Jesus goes forth sowing the seed which is the Word of God, and then the Evil One immediately follows and sows his tares. And the sad thing is that while men refuse to believe the Word of the living God, yet they are sufficiently credulous to accept Satan's lies. So it was at the beginning, and so it has been ever since. Finally, he dares to cast reflection upon God's goodness, and to call in question His perfections. "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." In other words, the Devil here suggests, that God was despotically withholding from man something that would be advantageous to him, and he presents as his bait the promise that, if only Eve will believe his lie rather than God's Word she shall be the gainer, and the obtainer of a knowledge and wisdom previously denied her.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

### **Using other scriptures, what are we told about Satan before he tempted Eve?**

Adam and Eve were given one command from God not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It was the beginning of man being subject to divine government. **Are the Lord's demands ever grievous or overbearing?**

Hosea 6:6

### **Read Hosea 2:19-23, and describe God's heart toward His people.**

### **What would life truly have been if all people had submitted to Jehovah God's ways and ignored Satan?**

## Genesis 3:7-8

The first effect of the Fall upon Adam and Eve was a realization of their shame. "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked." Through sin man obtained that which he did not have before (at least, in operation), namely, a conscience—a knowledge of both good and evil. This was something which unfallen man did not possess, for man was created in a state of innocency, and innocence is ignorance of evil. But as soon as man partook of the forbidden fruit he became conscious of his wrongdoing, and his eyes were opened to see his fallen condition. And conscience, the moral instinct, is something which is now common to human nature. Man has that within him which witnesses to his fallen and sinful condition! But not only does conscience bear witness to man's depravity, it is also one of the marks of a personal Creator's handiwork. The conscience cannot be of man's making. He would not voluntarily have set up an accuser, a judge, a tormentor, in his own breast. From whence then does it proceed? It is no more the result of education than is reason or memory, though like both, it may be cultivated. Conscience is the still small voice of God within the soul, testifying to the fact that man is not his own master but responsible to a moral law which either approves or reproves.

Having become conscious of their shame, Adam and Eve at once endeavored to hide it by making unto themselves aprons of fig leaves. This action of theirs was highly significant. Instead of seeking God and openly confessing their guilt, they attempted to conceal it both from Him and from themselves. Such has ever been the way of the natural man. The very last thing he will do is to own before God his lost and undone condition. Conscious that something is wrong within him, he seeks shelter behind his own self-righteousness and trusts that his good works will more than counter-balance his

evil ones. Church-going, religious exercises, attention to ordinances, philanthropy, and altruism, are the fig leaves which many today are weaving into aprons to cover their spiritual shame. But like those which our first parents sewed together they will not endure the test of eternity. At best they are but things of time which will speedily crumble away to dust.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Does one's conscience take a person away from God, as it did with Adam and Eve? Could it also bring one closer to Him? Give a Bible example of someone whose conscience was definitely pricked by God. Did that person truly repent and become restored to fellowship with the Lord?**

**When you, as a follower of Christ, read the Bible, does the Word preach to your conscience? If your answer is yes, can this explain why many unbelievers do not desire to read the Word?**

### **Genesis 3:9**

"And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?" Beautiful indeed is this record of Divine grace. This was not the voice of the policeman, but the call of a yearning love. Dark as is the background here, it only serves more clearly to reveal the riches of God's grace. Highly favored as our first parents were, blest with everything the heart could desire, only a single restriction placed upon their liberty in order to test their loyalty and fidelity to their Maker—how fearful then their fall, how terrible, their sin! What wonder if God had consigned them to "everlasting chains under darkness," as He did the angels when they sinned? What wonder if His wrath had instantly consumed them? Such would have been no undue severity. It would simply have been bare justice. It was all they deserved. But no. In His infinite condescension and abundant mercy, God deigned to be the Seeker, and came down to Eden crying, Where art thou?

W. Griffith Thomas has forcibly summed up the significance of this question in the following words: "God's question to Adam still sounds in the ear of every sinner: 'Where art thou?' It is the call of Divine justice, which cannot overlook sin. It is the call of Divine sorrow, which grieves over the sinner. It is the call of Divine love which offers redemption from sin. To each and to every one of us the call is reiterated, 'Where art thou?'"

Everything recorded in Genesis 3 has far more than a local significance. God's attitude and action there were typical and characteristic. It was not Adam who sought God, but God who sought Adam. And this has been the order ever since. "There is none that seeketh after God" (Rom. 3: 11). It was God who sought out and called Abram while yet an idolater. It was God who sought Jacob at Bethel when he was fleeing from the consequences of his wrong doing. It was God who sought out Moses while a fugitive in Midian. It was Christ who sought out the apostles whilst they were engaged in fishing, so that He could say, "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you." It was Christ who, in His ineffable love, came to seek and to save that which was lost. It is the Shepherd who seeks the sheep, and not the sheep who seek the Shepherd. How true it is that "We love Him because He first loved us." O, that we might appreciate more deeply the marvelous condescension of Deity in stooping so low as to care for and seek out such poor worms of the dust.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Possibly from your own experience, or that of another whose life story you have read, tell of various ways and means that God uses to "corner" or persuade one into a position from which there is no escape and so that the person whom He loves and tenderly desires is brought Home to Himself.** The man who wrote "Amazing Grace" in his penitent life, John Newton, comes to mind here.

### **Genesis 3:10-13**

The philosophy of life as interpreted by the Darwinian school, affirms that sin is merely a present imperfection and limitation which will gradually disappear as the human race ascends the hill of life. The evolutionary hypothesis, therefore, not only denies the teaching of Genesis one, but it also repudiates the facts recorded in Genesis three. And here is the real point and purpose of Satan's attack. The specious reasoning of our modern theologians has not only attempted to undermine the authenticity of the account of Creation, but it has also succeeded in blunting the point of the Gospel's appeal.

By denying the Fall, the imperative need of the new birth has been concealed. For, if man began at the bottom of the moral ladder—as evolutionists ask us to believe—and is now slowly but surely climbing heavenwards, then all he needs is education and cultivation. On the other hand, if man commenced at the top of the ladder but through sin fell to the bottom—as the Bible declares—then he is in urgent need of regeneration and justification. The issue thus raised is vital and fundamental.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)



Carefully study the following separate passages, to strengthen the strong truth stated above: Rom. 3:9-26 2 Cor. 4:3-6 2 Cor. 5:14-21

### Genesis 3:14-15

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shall bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:5). Here again we behold the exceeding riches of God's grace. Before He acted in judgment He displayed His mercy; before He banished the guilty ones from Eden, He gave them a blessed promise and hope. Though Satan had encompassed the downfall of man, it is announced that One shall come and bruise his head. By woman had come sin, by woman should come the Savior. By woman had come the curse, by woman should come Him who would bear and remove the curse. By woman Paradise was lost, yet by woman should be born the One who should regain it. O what grace—the Lord of glory was to be the woman's Seed!

Here we have the *beginning and germ of all prophecy*. It would be outside our province now to attempt anything more than a bare outline of the contents of this wonderful verse. But three things should be carefully noted. First, it is announced that there should be enmity between Satan and the woman. This part of the verse is invariably passed over by commentators. Yet it is of profound importance. The "woman" here typifies Israel—the woman from whom the promised Seed came—the woman of Revelation 12. The children of Israel being the appointed channel through which the Messiah was to come, and became the object of Satan's continued enmity and assault. How marvelously this prediction has already been fulfilled, all students of Scripture know full well. The "famines" mentioned in Genesis were the first efforts of the enemy to destroy the fathers of the chosen race. The edict of Pharaoh to destroy all the male children; the Egyptian attack at the Red Sea; the assaults of the Canaanites when in the land; the plot of Haman, are all so many examples of this enmity between Satan and "the woman," while the continued persecution of the Jew by the Gentiles and the yet future opposition by the Beast witness to the same truth.

Second, two "seeds" are here referred to—another item which is generally overlooked—"thy seed" and "her seed"—Satan's seed and the woman's Seed—the Antichrist and the Christ. In these two persons all prophecy converges. In the former of these expressions—"thy seed" (Satan's seed) we have more than a hint of the supernatural and satanic nature and character of the Antichrist. From the beginning the Devil has been an imitator, and the climax will not be reached until he daringly travesties the hypostatic union of the two natures in our blessed Lord—His humanity and His Deity. The Antichrist will be the Man of Sin and yet the Son of Perdition—literally the "seed" of the serpent—just as our Lord was the Son of Man and the Son of God in one person. This is the only logical conclusion. If "her seed" ultimates in a single personality—the Christ—then by every principle of sound interpretation "thy seed" must also ultimate in a single person—the Antichrist.

"Her seed"—the woman's Seed. Here we have the first announcement concerning the supernatural birth of our Savior. It was prophetically foretold that He should enter this world in an unique manner. Her seed—the woman's seed, not the man's! How literally this was fulfilled we learn from the two inspired records given us in the New Testament of the miraculous conception. A "virgin" was with child and four thousand years after this initial prediction "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman" (Gal. 4:4).

In the third item of this marvelous prophecy reference is made to a double "bruising"—the woman's Seed shall bruise the Serpent's head, and the Serpent should bruise His heel. The last clause in this prediction has already become history. The "bruising" of the heel of the woman's Seed is a symbolical reference to the sufferings and death of our Savior, who was "wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities." The first of these clauses yet awaits fulfillment. The bruising of the Serpent's head will take place when our Lord returns to the earth in person and in power, and when "the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan shall be bound for a thousand years (the Millennium) and cast into the bottomless pit" (Rev. 20:2, 3). Again, we say, what a remarkable proof this verse furnishes us of the Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures! Who but He who knows the end from the beginning could have such an accurate outline of subsequent history, and packed it within the limits of this one verse!

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

### **Has the woman's seed already bruised the serpent's head or does this happen at His Second Coming?**

Col. 2:13-15 2 Thess. 1:5-10

### Genesis 3:16

The divine judgment swiftly follows. God is not hasty or severe, but gives the guilty ones the fullest opportunity for vindication. "Where are you?" (3:9). "What is this you have done?" (3:13). "Have you eaten from the tree, that I commanded you not to eat from?" (3:11). There is no charge. There is no anger, but calm and forbearing patience and justice, and a seeming unwillingness even to believe in the reality of their sin.

Next the sentence follows on the woman. It consigns her to a lot of suffering subjection. She had followed a false ambition and sought a forbidden exaltation "that she should be like God" (3:5), and so she is subjected to a place of subordination. And a large part of the lesson of her life is to die to her own pride and will. Her very affections are made to her the instruments and occasions of deeper suffering, and the joys and hopes of her life and destiny are all linked with the keenest pain. Woman has ever since been the suffering partner in the human family, and man's inhumanity has made the curse more bitter and hard than God designed.

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

### Comment on the woman's sentence.

#### Genesis 3:17-19

What was the punishment which followed the first Adam's sin? In answering this question we confine ourselves to the chapter now before us. Beginning at the seventeenth verse of Genesis 3 we may trace a seven-fold consequence upon the entrance of sin into this world. **First**, the ground was *cursed*. **Second**, in *sorrow* man was to eat of it all the days of his life. **Third**, thorns and thistles it was to bring forth. **Fourth**, in the sweat of man was to eat his bread. **Fifth**, unto dust man was to return. **Sixth**, a flaming sword barred his way to the life. **Seventh**, there was the execution of God's threat in the day man partook of the forbidden fruit he surely die. Such was the curse which fell upon all men as the result of the Fall.

Observe now how completely the Lord Jesus bore the consequences of man's sin. **First**, Christ was "made a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13). **Second**, so thoroughly was He acquainted with grief, He was known as "the man of sorrows" (Isa. 53:3). **Third**, in order that we might know how literally the Holy One bore in His own body the sequences of Adam's sin, we read "Then came Jesus forth wearing the crown of thorns" (John 19:5). **Fourth**, responding with the sweat of his face in which the man was to eat his bread, we learn concerning the Second Man, "And His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Luke 22:44). **Fifth**, just as the first Adam was to return unto the dust, so the cry of the Last Adam, in that wonderful prophetic Psalm, was "Thou hast brought Me into the dust of death" (Psalm 22:15). **Sixth**, the sword of justice which barred the way to the tree of life was sheathed in the side of God's Son, for of old, Jehovah had said, Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the man that is My Fellow" (Zech. 13:7). **Seventh**, the counterpart of God's original threat to Adam, namely, spiritual death (for he did not die physically that same day), which is the separation of the soul from God, is witnessed in that most solemn of all cries, "My God, My God, Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Matt. 27:46). How absolutely did our blessed Savior identify Himself with those which were lost, took their place and suffered the Just for the unjust! How apparent it is, that Christ in His own body, did bear the Curse entailed by the Fall.

In conclusion we shall now consider Christ reversing the effects of the Fall. God alone is able to bring good out of evil and make even the wrath of man to praise Him. The Fall has afforded Him an opportunity to exhibit His wisdom and display the riches of His grace to an extent which, so far as we can see, He never could have done, had not sin entered the world. In the sphere of redemption Christ has not only reversed the effects of the Fall, but because of it has brought in a better thing. If God could have found a way, consistently with His own character, to restore man to the position which he occupied before he became a transgressor, it would have been a remarkable triumph, but that through Christ man should actually be the gainer is a transcendent miracle of Divine wisdom and grace. Yet such is the case. The redeemed have gained more through the Last Adam than they lost through the first Adam. They occupy a more exalted position. Before the Fall Adam dwelt in an earthly Paradise, but the redeemed have been made to sit with Christ in heavenly places. Through redemption they have been blest with a nobler nature. Before the Fall man possessed a natural life, but now, all in Christ have been made partakers of the Divine nature. They have obtained a new standing before God. Adam was merely innocent, which is a negative condition, but believers in Christ are righteous, which is a positive state. We share a better inheritance. Adam was lord of Eden, but believers are "heirs of all things," "heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." Through grace we have been made capable of a deeper joy than unfallen spirits have known: the bliss of pardoned sin, the heaven of deep conscious obligation to Divine mercy. In Christ believers enjoy a closer relationship to God than was possible before the Fall. Adam was merely a creature, but we are members of the body of Christ, "members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones." How marvelous! We have been taken into union with Deity itself, so that the Son of God is not ashamed to call us brethren. The Fall provided the need of Redemption, and through the redeeming work of the Cross, believers have a portion which unfallen Adam could never have attained unto. Truly, "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

The fall is a historical fact and the only adequate explanation of the human ills in history. **So if we are by nature alienated from God, how are we brought back to a working relationship with God here on earth?**

2 Cor. 5:17 Gal. 2:20 Eph 2:1-10

## Genesis 3:20-21

"Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them" (Gen. 3:21). In order to adequately explain and expound this verse many pages might well be written, but perforce, we must content ourselves with a few lines. This verse gives us a typical picture of a sinner's salvation. It was the first Gospel sermon, preached by God Himself, not in words but in symbol and action. It was a setting forth of the way by which a sinful creature could return unto and approach his holy Creator. It was the initial declaration of the fundamental fact that "without shedding of blood is no remission." It was a blessed illustration of *substitution*—the innocent dying in the stead of the guilty.

Before the Fall, God had defined the wages of sin: "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely *die*." God is righteous, and as Judge of all the earth He must do right. His law had been broken and justice cried aloud for the enforcing of its penalty. But is justice to override mercy? Is there no way by which grace can reign through righteousness? Blessed be God there is, there was. Mercy desired to spare the offender and because justice demands death, another shall be slain in his place. The Lord God clothed Adam and Eve with skins, and in order to procure these skins animals must have been slain, life must have been taken, blood must have been shed. And in this way was a covering provided for the fallen and ruined sinner. The application of the type (foreshadow) is obvious. The Death of the Son of God was shadowed forth. Because the Lord Jesus laid down His life for the sheep, God can now be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Adam and Eve made a vain attempt to cover themselves—why was it that before they sinned they never were disturbed by their nakedness? Was this God's way of teaching them that sin (theirs and everyone's) required more than a covering—it required a sacrifice, and one of blood? Does this lead us to the New Covenant and the death of Christ—for our sins? Describe how the coats of skins were a type (foreshadow) of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Isa. 53:5, 6, 10, 11

Isa. 59:2

Isa. 61:10

Matt. 26:28 Eph. 4:18

Heb. 9:12

## Genesis 3:22-24

"So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life" (Gen. 3:24). This was the immediate climax in the Divine condemnation of the first sin. After sentence of judgment had been passed, first upon the serpent, then upon the woman, and finally upon the man, and after God had acted in mercy by giving them a precious promise to stay their hearts and by providing a covering for their shame, Adam and Eve were driven out of Paradise. The moral significance of this is plain. It was impossible for them to remain in the garden and continue in fellowship with the Lord. "He is holy, and that which defileth cannot enter" His presence. Sin always results in separation. "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you" (Isa. 59:2).

Here we see the fulfillment of God's threat. He had announced, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Die, not only physically—there is something infinitely worse than that—but die spiritually. Just as physical death is the separation of the soul from the body, so spiritual death is the separation of the soul from God.—"This my son was *dead* (separated from me) and is alive again"—restored to me. When it is said that we are by nature "dead in trespasses and sins," it is because men are "alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph. 4:18). In like manner, that judicial death which awaits all who die in their sins—the "Second Death"—is not annihilation, as so many are now falsely teaching, but eternal separation—from God, and everlasting punishment in the lake of fire. And so here in Genesis 3 we have God's own definition of death—separation from Him, evidenced by the expulsion of man from Eden.

The barring of the way to the tree of life illustrated an important spiritual truth. In some peculiar way this tree seems to have been a symbol of the Divine presence (see Prov. 3:18), and the fact that fallen man had no right of access to it further emphasized the moral distance at which he stood from God. The sinner, as such, had no access to God, for the sword of justice barred his way, just as the veil in the Tabernacle and Temple shut man out from the Divine presence. But blessed be God, we read of One who has opened for us a "new and living way" to God, yea, who is Himself the Way (John 14:6). And how has that been accomplished? Did justice withdraw her sword? Nay, it sheathed it in the side of our adorable Savior. Doubtless that solemn but precious word in Zechariah 13:7, "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd," looks back to Genesis 3:24. And because the Shepherd was smitten the sheep are spared, and in the Paradise of God we shall eat of the fruit of that tree from which Adam was barred (see Rev. 2:7).

Summing up, then, this important division of our subject—God and the Fall—we discover here: An exhibition of His condescension in seeking man; an evidence of His mercy in giving a blessed prophecy and promise to sustain and cheer the heart of man; a demonstration of His grace in providing a covering for the shame of man; a display of His holiness in punishing the sin of man; and a typical foreshadowment of the urgent need of a Mediator between God and man.

**Does it not strike you that God Himself went to such great lengths over a long period of time, in order to provide a means whereby man could once again be in reconciliation and fellowship with Him?**

At this point in the Word, the New Covenant and Jesus' coming and dying for mankind was still a long ways off. **Please comment on how you look on God's ways and planning? Can you say with all honesty that His dealings with the Earth, with mankind, and with yourself are the very highest and best even though it takes time? Does this help to bring you more into conformity to His will for the fruition of His great Plan for the entire world? (Quote any Scripture that may apply.)**

### **Genesis 4:1-2**

Had his birth taken place while the primeval pair were in the full possession of their original rectitude and immortality, this son would have inherited the same pure and exalted nature, and have come into the world in circumstances equally favorable as the first man was at the period of his creation. But, fallen as his parents had become from their primitive integrity, they transmitted to their offspring a corrupt and disordered nature; and hence their eldest son, though doubtless instructed by his penitent and pious parents in the knowledge and revealed worship of God, and unexposed to any moral contagion or seductive example from without, yet gave early indications of that moral perversion, that strong propensity to evil, which has characterized the human race ever since the fall. Of course, Abel was a partaker of the same sinful nature; but, as his heart was early given to God, through faith in the appointed method of salvation, he was made an heir of grace and a subject of holiness.

(Bible Commentary, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown)

**Do you think Adam and Eve may have felt some guilt knowing their offspring would now have a corrupt and disordered nature?**

### **Genesis 4:3-5**

The record of Genesis 4 is exceedingly terse and much is gathered up which scarcely appears on the surface. The central truth of the chapter is that God is to be worshipped, that He is to be worshipped through sacrifice, that He is to be worshipped by means of a sacrifice which is appropriated by faith (cf. Heb. 11:4). Three things are to be carefully noted in regard to the worship of Cain and Abel. First, that there was a *place* where God was to be worshipped. This is indicated in the third verse: "Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord." That is, he brought his offering to some particular place. This supposition seems to be supported by the language of verse 16—"And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord." A further corroboration may be discovered in the mention of "the fat" which Abel brought (verse 4). "The firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof" suggests an altar upon which the victim should be offered and upon which the fat should be burned. Where this place of worship was located perhaps we cannot say for certain, but there is ground for believing that it was at the east of the Garden of Eden. Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, in their commentary on Genesis, translate the last verse of Genesis 3 as follows: "And He (God) dwelt at the east of the garden of Eden between the Cherubim, as a Shekinah (a fire-tongue or fire-sword) to keep open the way to the Tree of Life." The same thought is presented in the Jerusalem Targum. If the grammatical construction of the Hebrew will warrant this translation, then Genesis 3:24 would seem to signify that, having expelled man from the garden, God established a mercy-seat protected by the Cherubim, the fire-tongue or sword being the symbol of the Divine presence, and whoever would worship God must approach this mercy-seat by way of sacrifice. We commend this suggestion to the prayerful consideration of our readers. To say the least, Genesis 4 seems to imply that there was *some definite place* to which Cain and Abel brought their offerings, a place which they entered and from which they went out.

Second: Not only does there appear to have been a definite place of worship, but there seems also to have been an *appointed time* for worship. The marginal reading of Genesis 4:3 gives, "And at the end of days it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord." May not this signify, at the end of the week? In other words, does not this expression appear to point to the Sabbath day as the time when God was to be formally worshipped? A third thing implied is a *prescribed means of worship*. God could be approached and worshipped *only* by means of sacrifice. This incident then seems to intimate that the children of Adam and Eve had been definitely instructed that there was a *place* where God could be found, that there was a *time* in which to come before Him, and that *appointed means of approach* had been established. Neither Cain nor Abel would have known anything about sacrifices unless sacrifices had been definitely appointed. From Hebrews 11:4 we learn that it was "By faith Abel offered" his sacrifice, and in Romans 10:17 we are told that "Faith cometh by hearing." It was by faith and not by fancy that Abel brought his offering to God.

He had heard that God required a sacrifice, he believed, and he evidenced his faith by compliance with God's revealed will.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**What category (or categories) would you place Cain's sin in? Tell what was lacking that God desired. Can you think of present-day sins that would be similar to Cain's?**

1 Sam. 15:22, 23 Prov. 6:16-19 Eph. 4:31 Col. 3:5-10 2 Tim. 3:5

### **Genesis 4:6-8**

Undoubtedly the words "If thou doest well" have reference to the bringing of a proper offering to the Lord. In case Cain was willing to do this Jehovah asks, "Shalt thou not have the excellency" (margin), which means, Shalt thou not retain the right of primogeniture over Abel? "And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door," which we understand to mean, If you refuse to bring the required offering, sin lieth (Hebrew, is crouching) at the door, and like a wild beast is ready to spring upon you and devour you. The remainder of the verse referring back to the matter of Cain's rights by virtue of his seniority.

The use of the word "And" all through the passage and the word "Also" in verse 4 seem to show that Cain and Abel came together to present their offerings unto the Lord. Abel's offering was accepted, Cain's was rejected. Probably, Cain reasoned from this that there would likely be a change in the order of primogeniture and that his younger brother should become his ruler. Hence his "wroth" and readiness to kill Abel rather than submit to him. In a word Cain intended to be first at all costs. Believing that he had lost the place and privilege of the firstborn—for only upon his bringing of the stipulated offering could he continue to rule over his brother—and refusing to sacrifice according to God's requirements, and fearing that Abel would now be his ruler, he decided that rather than submit to this, he would kill his brother. Such we believe to be the real explanation, the motive, the cause of the first murder. The first word of verse 8 which recounts the deed bears this out, linking it as it does with the previous verse.

To summarize our suggested interpretation of verse 7: Cain's offering having been refused, anger filled his heart. Jehovah asks him why he is wroth, and tells him there is no just cause for his displeasure, and that if he will bring the required offering it would be accepted and Cain would then retain the rights of the firstborn. At the same time God faithfully and solemnly warns him of the consequences which will follow his refusal to bring the specified sacrifice. If his sin is not removed by an expiatory offering, it will spring upon and devour him. Cain refused to comply with Jehovah's demands and the Divine threat was carried out. What an illustration of James 1:15! "When lust (desire, passion) hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin when it is finished (consummated), bringeth forth death." This was the precise order in Cain's case: first-lust anger—then, sin-lying at the door,—then, death—Abel murdered.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Tell in your own words what is fully meant in Genesis 4:5-8.**

### **Genesis 4:9-10**

"And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not. Am I my brother's keeper? And He said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." Sin cannot be hid. There may have been no human witness to Cain's crime, but the eye of God had seen it. Solemn is the lesson taught here. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked." "Be sure your sin will find you out." "For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known," are only so many ways of stating the same truth. To Jehovah's pointed inquiry, Cain replied, "I know not." How this brings out the inveterate evil of the human heart! There was no contrition, no confessing of sin, but instead, a repudiation and covering of it. So it was with our first parents in Eden, and so it ever is with all their descendants until God's grace works effectually in us. It is to be noted that we have here the first mention of "blood" in Scripture, and like all first mentionings therein, it expresses what is primary and fundamental, hinting also at the amplifications of subsequent teaching. The blood here was innocent blood, blood shed by wicked hands, blood which cried aloud to God. How deeply significant! How it speaks to us of the precious blood of Christ!

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**In verse 10 of chapter 4, God fully knew what Cain had done, but why did He ask him a most demanding question—"What have you done?"**

**In Leviticus 17:11 we find that the "life of the flesh is in the blood." Show how the One who gives that blood hears its cry?**

Isa. 26:21 Ezek. 24:1-14 Matt. 23:28-36 Rev. 6:1

If we were to study just the word "sin" in all its varied meaning we would see, first of all, that

Sin separates from God – Isa. 59:1, 2

Sin is unrighteousness – 1 John 5:17

Sin is lawlessness – 1 John 3:5

Whoever sins does not see or know God – 1 John 3:6

Sin is not of faith – Rom. 14:23

Sin is called foolishness – Prov. 24:9

Sin begins in man's heart – Matt. 15:19

Sin is showing partiality – James 1:9

Sin happens when one obeys Satan – John 8:44

Sin causes bondage – John 8:33, 34

Sin is transgression against another person — Ps. 19:13

Without new life from Christ, sin ends in death – Rom. 6:23

**Choose one statement above regarding sin, and enlarge on it.**

### **Genesis 4:11-16**

After the Divine inquisition comes the Divine sentence upon the guilty one telling of God's holiness and righteousness which will not for an instant tolerate sin, "And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. When thou tills the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth." No matter where he should go in the world the ground should be against him, the ground that held the blood of his brother, the blood of his victim. The remembrance of his murder should pursue him, so that he would not be able to content himself long in any one place.

And Cain said unto the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear." Cain now realizes something of what he has done, though his mind is occupied more with his punishment than with the sin which had caused it. "My punishment is greater than I can bear" will be the language of the lost in the Lake of Fire. The awful lot of the unsaved will be unbearable, and yet it will have to be endured and endured forever. "From Thy face shall I be hid" cried Cain. Though the sinner knows it not, this will be the most terrible feature of his punishment—eternally banished from God. "Depart from Me, ye cursed" will be the fearful sentence passed upon the wicked in the day of judgment. "And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod." Nod means "wandering," there is no peace or rest for the wicked: in this world they are like the troubled waves of the sea; in the world to come, they shall be like wandering stars, lost in the blackness of darkness forever. My reader, if you reject the Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, Cain's doom shall be your doom. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Cain now is labeled a "murderer" and is alienated both from the ground and from society. **Can he find any rest?**

**Does God's curse now link Cain with Satan?**

1 John 3:12

**Has his time of grace ended, and is he forever consigned to judgment?**

Heb. 9:27 Heb. 10:27

**Is Cain more consumed with self pity than he is with desiring to be right with the God who made him?**

Abel's blood cries out for vengeance (Isa. 26:21, Matt. 23:25, Rev. 6:10)— WHEREAS – Christ's blood cries out for forgiveness (Heb. 12:24)

### **Genesis 4:17-5:32**

In our comments upon the fourth chapter of Genesis, we noted how that the descendants of Adam followed two distinct lines of worship through Cain and Abel—Abel worshipping God by faith and bringing a bleeding sacrifice as the ground of his approach; Cain, ignoring the double fact that he was depraved by nature because descended from fallen parents, and a sinner by choice and deed and, therefore, rejecting the vicarious expiation prescribed by grace, tendered only the product of his own labors, which was promptly refused by his Maker. The remainder of the chapter traces the

godless line of Cain down to the seventh generation, and then closes with an account of the birth of Seth, the appointed successor of Abel and the one from whom the chosen race and the Messiah should come.

Genesis 5 begins a new section and traces for us the line of Seth. The opening words of this chapter are worthy of close attention. No less than ten times we find in Genesis this phrase, "These are the generations of," (see 2:4; 6-9; 10:1; 11:10; 11-27; 25:12; 25:19; 36:1; 36:9; 37:2); but here in Genesis 5:1 there is an important addition—"This is the book of the generations of Adam." Nowhere else in Genesis, nor, indeed, in the Old Testament (compare Num. 3:1 and Ruth 4:18), does this form of expression recur. But we do find it once more when we open the New Testament, and there it meets us in the very first verse! "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ." This is deeply significant and a remarkable proof of verbal inspiration.

Why, then, should there be these two different forms of expression, and only these two—Genesis 5:1 and Matthew 1:1—exceptions to the usual form? Surely the answer is not far to seek. Are not these the two books of Federal Headship? In the first book — "The book of the generations of Adam"—are enrolled the names of the fallen descendants of the first man; in the second— "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ"—are inscribed the names of all who have been redeemed by sovereign grace. One is the Book of Death; the other is the Lamb's Book of Life.

"The book of the generations of Adam," "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ," and do we not see the marvelous unity of the two Testaments? The whole of the Bible centers around these two books—the book of the generations of Adam, and the book of the generation of Jesus Christ.

But what is the force of this word "generations?" Here the law of First Mention will help us. The initial occurrence of this expression defines its scope. When we read in Genesis 2:4, "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth," the reference is not to origin but to development. Had Genesis 2:4 been intended to supply information as to how the heavens and the earth were produced, this expression would have occurred at the commencement of Genesis 1, which deals with that subject. Again, when we read of "The generations of Noah" (Gen. 6:9) it is not to give us the ancestry of this patriarch—that is found in Genesis 5—but to tell us who were his descendants, as the very next verse goes on to show. "Generations," then, means history, development, and not origin. Try this key in each lock and you will find it fits perfectly. "The generations (or history) of the heavens and of the earth." So here in Genesis 5:1. From this point onwards we have the history and development of Adam's progeny. So, too, of Matthew 1:1. What is the New Testament but the history and development of Jesus Christ and His brethren?

As we have stated, chapter five opens a new section of Genesis. Righteous Abel has been slain, and all the descendants of Cain are doomed to destruction by the Flood. It is from Seth, that there shall issue Noah, whose children, coming out of the Ark, shall replenish the earth. Hence it is that we are here taken back once more to the beginning. Adam is again brought before us—fallen Adam—to show us the source from which Seth sprang.

Two sentences in the opening verses of this chapter Gen. 5 need to be carefully compared and contrasted. "In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him," Gen. 5:1. "And Adam. . . begat a son in his own likeness, after his image," Gen. 5:3. By sin Adam lost the image of God and became corrupt in his nature and a fallen parent could do no more than beget a fallen child. Seth was begotten in the likeness of a sinful father! Since Noah was the direct descendant of Seth and is the father of us all, and since he was able to transmit to us only that which he had, himself, received from Seth, we have here the doctrine of universal depravity. Every man living in the world today is, through Noah and his three sons, a descendant of Seth, hence it is that care is here taken at the beginning of this new section to trace the spring back to its fountain head, and show how all are, by nature, the fallen offspring of a fallen parent and that we have all been begotten in the image and likeness of a corrupt and sinful father.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

### **What was required for Enoch to walk with God even though he also was universally depraved?**

Gen. 6:8-9    Heb. 11:5-6    1 John 1:6-7    Jude 14, 15

### **Genesis 6:1-4**

We turn now to consider the occasion of the Flood. "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose" (Gen. 6:1, 2). There has been considerable difference of opinion among commentators and expositors in respect to the identity of these "sons of God." The view which has been most widely promulgated and accepted is, that these marriages between the sons of God and the daughters of men refer to unions between believers and unbelievers. It is supposed that the "sons of God" were the descendants of Seth, while the "daughters of men" are regarded as the offspring of Cain, and that these two lines gradually amalgamated, until the line of distinction between God's people and the world was obliterated. It is further supposed that the Deluge was a visitation of God's judgment, resulting from His peoples' failure to maintain their place of separation. But, it seems to us, there are a number of insuperable objections to this interpretation.

If the above theory were true, then, it would follow that at the time this amalgamation took place God's people were limited to the male sex, for the "sons of God" were the ones who "married" the "daughters of men." Again; if the popular

theory were true, if these "sons of God" were believers, then they perished at the Flood, but 2 Peter 2:5 states otherwise—"Bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly." Once more; there is no hint in the Divine record (so far as we can discover) that God had yet given any specific command forbidding His people to marry unbelievers. In view of this silence it seems exceedingly strange that this sin should have been visited with such a fearful judgment. In all ages there have been many of God's people who have united with worldlings, who have been "unequally yoked together," yet no calamity in anywise comparable with the Deluge has followed. Finally; one wonders why the union of believers with unbelievers should result in "giants"—"there were giants in the earth in those days" (Gen. 6:4).

If, then, the words "sons of God" do not signify the saints of that age, to whom do they refer? In Job 1:6, 2:1, 38:7, the same expression is found, and in these passages the reference is clearly to angels. It is a significant fact that some versions of the Septuagint contain the word "angels" in Genesis 6:2, 4. That the "sons of God," who are here represented as cohabiting with the daughters of men were angels—fallen angels—seems to be taught in Jude 6: "And the angels which kept not their principality but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day."

These "sons of God" then, appear to be angels who left their own habitation, came down to earth, and cohabited with the daughters of men. Before we consider the outcome of this illicit intercourse, let us first enquire into the cause of it. Why did these angels thus "sin" (2 Pet. 2:4)? The answer to this question leads us into a mysterious subject—which we cannot now treat at length: the "why" finds its answer in Satan.

Immediately after that old serpent, the Devil, had brought about the downfall of our first parents, God passed sentence on the "serpent" and declared that the woman's "Seed" should "bruise his head" (Gen. 3:15). Hence, in due course, Satan sought to frustrate this purpose of God. His first effort was an endeavor to prevent his Bruiser entering this world. This effort is plainly to be seen in his attempts to destroy the channel through which the Lord Jesus was to come.

First, God revealed the fact that the Coming One was to be of human kind, the woman's Seed, hence, as we shall seek to show, Satan attempted to destroy the human race. Next, God made known to Abraham that the Coming One was to be a descendant of his (Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:18; Matt. 1:1); hence, four hundred years later, when the descendants of Abraham became numerous in Egypt Satan sought to destroy the Abrahamic stock, by moving Pharaoh to seek the destruction of all the male children (Ex. 1:15,16). Later, God made known the fact that the Coming One was to be of the offspring of David (2 Sam. 7:12,13); hence, the subsequent attack made upon David through Absalom (2 Sam. 15). As, then, the Coming One was to be of the seed of David, He must spring from the tribe of Judah, and hence the significance of the divided Kingdom, and the attacks of the Ten Tribes upon the Tribe of Judah!

The reference in Jude 6 to the angels leaving their own habitation, appears to point to and correspond with these "sons of God" (angels) coming in unto the daughters of men. Apparently, by this means, Satan hoped to destroy the human race (the channel through which the woman's Seed was to come) by producing a race of monstrosities. How nearly he succeeded is evident from the fact, that with the exception of one family, "all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth" (Gen. 6:12). That monstrosities were produced as the result of this unnatural union between the "sons of God" (angels) and the daughters of men, is evident from the words of Genesis 6:4: "There were giants in the earth in those days." The Hebrew word for "giants" here is nephilim, which means fallen ones, from "naphal" to fall. The term "men of renown" in Genesis 6:4 probably finds its historical equivalent in the "heroes" of Grecian mythology. Satan's special object in seeking to prevent the advent of the woman's "Seed" by destroying the human race was evidently an attempt to avert his threatened doom!

Against the view that "the sons of God" refer to fallen angels Matt. 22:30 is often cited. But when the contents of this verse are closely studied it will be found there is really nothing in it which conflicts with what we have said above. Had our Lord said, "in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God" and stopped there, the objection would have real force. But the Lord did not stop there. He added a qualifying clause about the angels: He said "as the angels of God in heaven." The last two words make all the difference. The angels in heaven neither marry nor are they given in marriage. But the angels referred to in Genesis 6 as the "sons of God" were no longer in heaven: as Jude 6 expressly informs us "they left their own principality." They fell from their celestial position and came down to earth, entering into unlawful alliance with the daughters of men. This, we are assured, is the reason why Christ modified and qualified His assertion in Matt. 22:30. The angels of God in heaven do not marry, but those who left their own principality did.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Although this passage is quite difficult to interpret, what is your view as to who is being referred to in these verses?**

Num. 13:32-33    Job 1:6    Matt. 22:30

**What Light (if any) did the antediluvians (people who lived before the flood) have concerning God and salvation?**

Gen. 6:3    3Rom. 1:18-21    Rom. 2:14-15    Heb. 11:5-7

**Show from Scripture that there is a limit on how long God will strive with man.**

Gen. 6:3    Ps. 103:6-10    Prov. 8:32-36    Zeph. 2:1-3    Luke 13:9    Rom. 1:16-32    Rom. 2:15



**At the end of the age in which we live (church/grace age) will the Spirit of God, who today strives with men, be taken away from the earth?**

Ps. 51:11 Ps. 139:7-13 2 Thess. 2:6-7 Heb. 9:14 Heb. 10:15-17 Rev. 22:17

**Genesis 6:5-12**

Little is told us of the parentage of Noah, yet sufficient is revealed to indicate that he was the descendant of believing ancestors and the child of a God-fearing father. Noah was the grandson of Methuselah, and the great grandson of Enoch who was translated to heaven. The name of his father was Lamech, and on the birth of his son we are told that "he called his name Noah, saying, this same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed" (Gen. 5:29). That Lamech was a man of faith appears from the fact that he attributed his "toil" and the condition of the ground to the Lord's "curse." Further, it seems as though God had revealed to him something of His future purposes in connection with Noah in that he looked on him as one that was to bring "comfort" or "rest."

The times in which Noah lived and the condition of the world then serve as a dark background to bring out in vivid relief the faith and righteousness of the one who was "perfect in his generations" and "walked with God." "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth Me that I have made man" (Gen. 6:5-7). What a terrible scene was here spread before the all-seeing eye of God, and how startling the contrast between it and the one on which He had looked at the close of the six days' work! There we are told, "God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Gen. 1:31). But here, the next time we read that "God saw" we are told that "the wickedness of man was great in the earth." How awful is sin, and how fearful its course when unrestrained by God!

But there is another, and a blessed contrast here, too. After we read of the greatness of man's wickedness and the consequent grief of God's heart, we are told, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Gen. 6:8). There was an oasis in the midst of the dreary desert, an oasis which the grace of God had prepared, and on which His eyes dwelt. When beholding the wicked we read only that God "saw," but when Noah is in view the "eyes of the Lord" are mentioned. A look at the former was sufficient; but something more definite and protracted greeted the latter.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Describe Noah's character and how he foreshadowed (or was a type of) the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Gen. 5:28-29 Gen. 6:9 Gen 7:1,5, 17 Gen 15:6 Luke 4:4 Luke 5:4-5 Luke 6:12 John 15:10  
John 17:4 John 18:9 Rom. 4:6, 22-25 Rom. 5:1-9 2 Cor. 5:7 Eph. 1:3, 12 Eph. 5:2, 11 Phil. 2:15, 16  
1 Thess. 5:9 Heb. 1:1,2 Heb. 3:6 Heb. 7:26 Heb. 11:7 1 Pet. 2:11, 12

**Genesis 6:13-22**

Faith not only relies upon the precious promises of God, but it also believes His solemn threatenings. As the beloved Spurgeon said, "He who does not believe that God will punish sin, will not believe that He will pardon it through the atoning blood. He who does not believe that God will cast unbelievers into hell, will not be sure that He will take believers to heaven. If we doubt God's Word about one thing, we shall have small confidence in it upon another thing. Since faith in God must treat all God's Word alike; for the faith which accepts one word of God, and rejects another, is evidently not faith in God, but faith in our own judgment, faith in our own taste." Noah had received from God a gracious promise, but he had also been warned of a coming judgment which should destroy all living things with a flood, and his faith believed both the promise and the warning. Again, we need the admonition of Mr. Spurgeon—"I charge you who profess to be the Lord's, not to be unbelieving with regard to the terrible threatenings of God to the ungodly. Believe the threat, even though it should chill your blood; believe, though nature shrinks from the overwhelming doom, for, if you do not believe, the act of disbelieving God about one point will drive you to disbelieve Him upon the other parts of revealed truth, and you will never come to that true, childlike faith which God will accept and honor."

"Faith, if it hath not works is dead, being by itself" (Jas. 2:17), which means, it is a lifeless faith, a merely nominal faith, and not the "faith of God's elect" (Titus 1:1). To the same effect: "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works," (Jas. 2:14). The Apostle Paul writes of the justification of believing sinners; James writes of the justification of faith itself, or rather, the claim to be in possession of faith. I profess to be a believer, how shall I justify my claim? By my works, my walk, my witness for God. Read through Hebrews 11 and it will be seen that in every case recorded there, faith was evidenced by works. Abel had faith. How did he display it? By presenting to God the Divinely prescribed sacrifice. Enoch had faith. How did he manifest it? By walking with God. Noah had faith. How did

he evidence it? By preparing the ark. And mark this also—faith expresses itself in that which costs its possessor something! The preparing of the ark was no small undertaking. It was not only a very laborious and protracted task, but it must have been a very expensive one too. It has ever been thus; Abraham was the father of the faithful, and his faith found expression and resulted in that which meant personal sacrifice. To Abraham it meant leaving home, kindred and country, and subsequently the offering up of his well beloved son on the altar of sacrifice. What is it costing you to express your faith? A faith that does not issue in that which is costly is not worth much.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

The ark of Noah also typified (or foreshadowed) salvation, for those who chose to come aboard with Noah, and it was covered inside and outside with pitch, which is a type (foreshadow) of the Holy Spirit's seal or covering. **It had only one window, looking only upward—why? And how is Christ's offer of salvation so much greater than this?**

**Explain how Noah was saved from God's judgment by grace through faith (6:9, 17-22). Show also how his works gave evidence that he was saved.**

Matt. 7:19, 20      Matt. 8:2      Rom. 5:1, 2      Rom. 14:23      2 Cor. 5:7, 17      Jas. 2:22      1 John 3:4

### **Genesis 7:1-24**

The ark which was built by Noah according to divine directions, in which he and his house, together with representatives from the lower creation, found shelter from the storm of God's wrath, is one of the clearest and most comprehensive types (shadows of what was to come) of the believer's salvation in Christ which is to be found in all the Scriptures.

The first thing to be noted in connection with the ark is that it was a Divine provision. This is very clear from the words of Genesis 6:13,14—"And God said unto Noah, the end of all flesh is come before Me .... make thee an ark." Before the flood came and before the ark was made, a means of escape for His own people existed in the mind of God. The ark was not provided by Him after the waters had begun to descend. Noah was commanded to construct it before a drop had fallen. So, too, the Saviorship of Christ was no afterthought of God when sin had come in and blighted His creation; from all eternity He had purposed to redeem a people unto Himself, and in consequence, Christ, in the counsels of the Godhead, was "a lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). The ark was God's provision for Noah as Christ is God's provision for sinners.

Observe now that God revealed to Noah His own designs and ordered him to build a place of refuge into which he could flee from the impending storm of judgment. The ark was no invention of Noah's; had not God revealed His thoughts to him, he would have perished along with his fellow creatures. In like manner, God has to reveal by His Spirit His thoughts of mercy and grace toward us; otherwise, in our blindness and ignorance we should be eternally lost. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6).

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Show how the flood typifies God's divine judgment.**

Gen. 7:23    Ex. 2:3    Ps. 32:6, 7    Ps. 93:3, 4    Isa. 59:19    Jer. 45:7, 8    Jonah 2:3-6    Matt. 7:25-27

**Show how the ark typifies, or points to our salvation and security.**

John 10:9      John 14:6      John 18:9      Acts 4:12      Acts 16:31      Col. 3:2, 3      1 Pet. 1:3-5

### **Genesis 8:1-9:17**

The covenants referred to therein constitute one of the principal keys to the interpretation of the Old Testament, denoting, as they do, the dividing lines between the different Dispensations, and indicating the several changes of procedure in God's dealings with the earth. At various times God condescended to enter into a compact with man and failure to observe the terms and scope of these compacts necessarily leads to the utmost confusion. The Word of truth can only be rightly divided as due attention is paid to the different covenants recorded therein. The covenants varied in their requirements, in their scope, in their promises and in the seals or signs connected with them. The inspired history growing out of the covenants furnishes a signal demonstration of God's faithfulness and of man's faithlessness and failure.

There are exactly seven covenants made by God referred to in Scripture, neither more nor less. First, the Adamic which concerned man's continued enjoyment of Eden on the condition that he refrain from eating the fruit of the forbidden tree. But Adam failed to keep his part of the agreement, (see Hosea 6:7 margin.) Second, the Noachic which concerned

the earth and its seasons, (see Genesis 9.) Third, the Abrahamic which concerned Israel's occupancy of Palestine, (see Genesis 15:18, etc.) Fourth, the Mosaic which concerned Israel's continued enjoyment of God's favors, conditioned by their obedience to His law, (see Exodus 24:7, 8; 34:27.) Fifth, the Levitic which concerned the priesthood, promising that it should remain in this tribe, (see Numbers 25:12,13; Malachi 2:4,5; Ezekiel 44:15), which proves God's faithfulness in respect to this covenant in the Millennium. Sixth, the Davidic which concerns the Kingdom and particularly the throne, (see 2 Samuel 23:5; 2 Chronicles 13:5.) Seventh, the Messianic or New Covenant which concerns the Millennium, (see Isaiah 42:6; Jeremiah 31:31-34.) Much might be written concerning these different covenants, but we limit ourselves to the second, the Noahic. We wish to say, however, that a careful study of the above references will richly repay every diligent and prayerful reader.

Coming now to the second of these great covenants let us notice the occasion of it. It was as it were the beginning of a new world. There was to be a fresh start. With the exception of those who found shelter in the ark, the flood had completely destroyed both the human family and the lower orders of creation. On to the destruction—swept earth came Noah and his family. Noah's first act was to build, not a house for himself, but an altar "unto the Lord," on which he presented burnt offerings. These were, unto the Lord, a "sweet savor," and after declaring that He would not curse the ground any more for man's sake, and after promising that while the earth remained its seasons should not cease, we are told "God blessed Noah and his sons" (9:1). This is the first time that we read of God blessing any since He had blessed unfallen man in Eden (Gen.1:28). The basis of this "blessing" was the burnt offerings; the design of it to show that the same Divine favor that was extended to Adam and Eve should now rest upon the new progenitors of the human race.

Here then we have the second "beginning" of Genesis, a beginning which, in several respects, resembled the first, particularly in the command to be fruitful and multiply, and in the subjection of the irrational creature to man's dominion. But there is one difference here which is important to notice: all now rests upon a covenant of grace based upon shed blood. Man had forfeited the "blessing" of God and his position as lord of creation, but grace restores and reinstates him. God makes a covenant with Noah which in its scope included the beasts of the field (9:2) who are made to be at peace with him and subject to his authority; and which in its duration would last while the earth remained.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Are you beginning to see the importance of the blood in sacrifice, and that it was required by God, though His instructions are not always clearly portrayed in the Word? (For the "life of the flesh is in the blood" – Lev. 17:11; Deut. 12:23)**

**Regarding "covenant," who made each covenant (of the seven) and why do you think they were needed, as far as mankind was concerned?**

**Finally, did God ever break a covenant He had made for His own? When covenants are broken, who does the breaking?**

### **Genesis 9:18-21**

Noah "planted a vineyard: and he drank of the wine and was drunken, and he was uncovered within his tent" (Gen. 9:21). As we read these words we are reminded of the Holy Spirit's comment upon the Old Testament Scriptures—"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning" (Rom. 15:4). What then are we to "learn" from this narration of Noah's sad fall?

First, we discover a striking proof of the Divine inspiration of the scriptures. In the Bible human nature is painted in its true colors: the characters of its heroes are faithfully depicted, the sins of its most prominent personages are frankly recorded. It is human to err, but it is also human to conceal the blemishes of those we admire. Had the Bible been a human production, had it been written by uninspired historians, the defects of its leading characters would have been ignored, or if recorded at all, an attempt at extenuation would have been made. Had some human admirer chronicled the history of Noah, his awful fall would have been omitted. The fact that it is recorded and that no effort is made to excuse his sin, is evidence that the characters of the Bible are painted in the colors of truth and nature, that such characters were not sketched by human pens, that Moses and the other historians must have written by Divine inspiration.

Second, we learn from Noah's fall that man at his best estate is altogether vanity; in other words, we see the utter and total depravity of human nature. Genesis 9 deals with the beginning of a new dispensation, and like those which preceded it and those which followed it, this also opened with failure. Whatever the test may be, man is unable to stand. Placed in an environment which the broom of destruction had swept clean; a solemn warning of the judgment of heaven upon evil-doers only recently spread before him; the blessing of God pronounced upon him, the sword of magisterial authority placed in his hand, Noah, nevertheless, fails to govern himself and falls into open wickedness. Learn then that man is essentially "evil" (Matt. 7:11) and that naught avails but "a new creation" (Gal. 6:15).

Third, we learn from Noah's fall the danger of using wine and the awful evils that attend intemperance. It is surely significant and designed as a solemn warning that the first time wine is referred to in the Scriptures it is found associated

with drunkenness, shame and a curse. Solemn are the denunciations of the Word upon drunkenness, a sin which, despite all the efforts of temperance reformers, is, taking the world as a whole, still on the increase. Drunkenness is a sin against God, for it is the abusing of His mercies; it is a sin against our neighbors, for it deprives those who are in want of their necessary supplies and sets before them an evil example; it is a sin against ourselves, for it robs of usefulness, self-government and common decency. Moreover, drunkenness commonly leads to other evils. It did in Noah's case; Noah's sin gave occasion for his son to sin.

Fourth, in Noah's sin we learn our need of watchfulness and prayer. A believer is never immune from falling. The evil nature is still within us and nothing but constant dependency upon God can enable us to withstand the solicitations of the world, the flesh, and the devil. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" is a word that every saint needs daily to take to heart. Neither age nor character is any security in the hour of testing. Here was a man who had withstood the temptations of an evil world for six hundred years, yet nevertheless, he now succumbs to the lusts of the flesh. And this is one of the things which is written for "our admonition" (1 Cor. 10:11). Then let us not sit in judgment upon Noah with pharisaical complacency, rather let us "consider ourselves, lest we also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1). No experience of God's mercies in the past can deliver us from exposure to new temptations in the future.

Finally, Noah's fall utters a solemn warning to every servant of God. It is deeply significant that following this prophecy, recorded in the closing verses of Genesis 9, nothing whatever save his death is recorded about Noah after his terrible fall. The last three hundred years of his life are a blank! "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 9:27)

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Consider Noah's life. On the whole, he truly walked with God for many years, taking a strong stand for God and His truth all the 120 years he was building the ark. Yet in just two verses (9:20, 21) following the flood, we are told of his falling away from God's grace. **State how Noah could wholly return to God.**

Rom. 6:18-23    Rom. 8:12-14    1 Cor. 9:27    2 Cor. 5:14-17    Eph. 6:10-18    1 Pet. 5:8

### **Genesis 9:22-29**

Having dwelt at some length upon Noah's fall and the lessons it is designed to teach us, we turn now to examine the prophecy which he uttered immediately after. Three things will engage our attention: the occasion of this prophecy, the meaning of this prophecy, and the fulfillment of it.

1. The occasion of Noah's prophecy. The setting of it is a remarkable one. The terrible fall of the illustrious patriarch and the wonderful prediction he uttered concerning the future history of the three great divisions of the human family are placed in juxtaposition. The fact that the Holy Spirit has thus joined these two together is a striking illustration of the truth that God's ways are different from ours. The devout student of the Word has learned that not only are the very words of Scripture inspired of God, but that their arrangement and order also evidence a wisdom that transcends the human. What then are we to learn from this linking together of Noah's fall and Noah's prophecy?

In seeking an answer to our last question we need to observe the scope of the prophecy itself. Noah's prediction contains an outline sketch of the history of the nations of the world. The great races of the earth are here seen in their embryonic condition: they are traced to their common source, through Shem, Ham and Japheth, back to Noah. The nature of the stream is determined by the character of the fountain—a bitter fountain cannot send forth sweet waters. The type of fruit is governed by the order of the tree—a corrupt tree cannot produce wholesome fruit. Noah is the fountain, and what sort of a stream could flow from such a fountain! Read again the sad recital of Noah's fall and of Ham's wickedness and then ask, what must be the fruit which springs from such a tree, what must be the harvest that is reaped from such a sowing? What will be the history of the races that spring from Noah's three sons? What can it be? A history that began by Noah abusing God's mercies; a history that commenced with the head of the new race failing, completely, to govern himself; a history that started with Ham's shameful impropriety can have only one course and end. It began with human failure, it has continued thus, and it will end thus. Here then is the answer to our question: Why is Noah's prophecy, which sketches the history of the three great races of mankind, linked to Noah's fall? The two are joined together as cause and effect, as premise and conclusion, as sowing and harvest!

It was written of old that "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." A striking illustration of this is discovered today in the wicked writings of the self-termed "Higher Critics." These blind leaders of the blind aim to degrade God's Word to the level of human productions and in this remarkable prophecy of Noah regarding his sons they see nothing more than a hasty ejaculation caused by the knowledge of his humiliation and expressed in this curse and blessing. That these words of Noah were not uttered to gratify any feeling of resentment, but were spoken under a Divine impulse is proven by the fulfillment of the prophecy itself. A very superficial acquaintance with the facts of ancient history will evidence the fact that there is far more in Noah's words than a local expression of indignation and gratitude. A careful comparison of other scriptures shows that this utterance of Noah was a prophecy and its remarkable fulfillment demonstrates that it was a Divine revelation.

*"And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.*

*"And he said. Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.*

*"God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant" (Gen. 9:25-27).*

2. Let us consider now the meaning of Noah's prophecy. This utterance consists of two parts: a malediction and a benediction. Noah's prediction concerning his sons corresponds with their conduct on the occasion of their father's drunkenness. Fearful had been the fall of Noah, but it was a still greater sin for Ham, on discovering the sad condition of his parent, to go out and report with malignant pleasure to his brethren. It is "fools" who "make a mock of sin" (Prov. 14:9). For a child to expose and sneer at his parent's fall was wickedness of the worst kind, and evidenced a heart thoroughly depraved.

In the curse passed upon Canaan we find an exceedingly solemn instance of the sins of the fathers being visited upon the children. In this day of human pride and skepticism, when everything is questioned and challenged, men have dared to criticize the ethics of this hereditary law. It has been termed unmerciful and unjust. The humble believer does not attempt to pry into things which are too deep for him; it is enough for him that the thrice holy God has instituted this law and therefore he knows it is a righteous one whether he can see the justice of it or not.

Ham's sin consisted of an utter failure to honor his father. He was lacking, altogether, in filial love. Had he really cared for his father at all he would have acted as his brothers did; but instead, he manifested a total disrespect for and subjection unto his parent. And mark the fearful consequence: he reaped exactly as he had sown—Ham sinned as a son and was punished in his son! The punishment meted out to Ham was that his son shall be brought into subjection to others, his descendants shall be compelled to honor, yea, "serve" others—"servant of servants" (verse 25) implies the lowest drudgery, slavery.

It is to be noted that the "curse" uttered by Noah did not fall directly on Ham but upon one of his sons, the fourth—"Canaan" (Gen. 10:6). As we shall seek to show, this curse was not confined to Canaan but embraced all the descendants of Ham. It is highly probable that "Canaan" was specifically singled out from the rest of his brethren as a special encouragement to the Israelites who, centuries later, were to go up and occupy the Promised land. Moses would thus be taught by the Holy Spirit that a special curse rested upon the then occupants of the land, i.e., the Canaanites. Yet, as we have said, all of Ham's children appear to have been included within the scope of this malediction as is evident from the fact that no blessing at all was pronounced upon Ham as was the case with each of his brothers.

"Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant" (verse 26). The reward of Shem was in the sphere of religious privileges. The Divine title employed here supplies the key. In the following verse we read, "God shall enlarge Japheth," but here "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, this being the title expressive of covenant relationship. God was to enter into covenant relationship with the children of Shem. The realization that Jehovah was to be the God of Shem caused Noah to break forth into thanksgiving—"Blessed be the Lord God of Shem. "

"God shall enlarge Japheth" (verse 27). The word Japheth means "enlargement" so that here there was a play upon words. "And he shall dwell in the tents of Shem." This expression is somewhat ambiguous, the obscurity being occasioned by the difficulty to ascertain the antecedent. Scholars and students have differed as to whether the "he" refers to God or to Japheth dwelling in the tents of Shem. Personally, we incline toward the latter alternative, though we believe that each of them has been verified in subsequent history. May it not be that the Holy Spirit has designedly left it uncertain, to show that both interpretations are true? Sure it is that God did dwell in the tents of Shem, and equally sure it is that the descendants of Japheth are now doing so.

3. The fulfillment of Noah's prophecy. The wonderful prediction uttered by the builder of the Ark gives in a few brief sentences the history of the new world, and shows the positions that were delegated by God to the three great divisions of the human family. In the closing verses of Genesis 9 we have a remarkable unfolding of the future destinies of the new humanity. The various parts which are to be played in human history by its leading characters are now made known. The subjection of one, the religious preeminence of the second, and the enlarging of the third head of the postdiluvian race, is here revealed.

"Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren" (verse 25). Above, we intimated that as no blessing at all was pronounced upon Ham as was the case with each of his brothers, it would seem that the curse, was not intended to be limited to Canaan (there being a particular reason why Canaan should be thus singled out, namely, as an encouragement to the Israelites,) but included all of his children. By tracing the history of Ham's other sons it becomes evident that the scope of Noah's prophecy reached beyond Canaan. Nimrod sprang from Ham through Cush (Gen. 10:6-8), and he founded the city and empire Babylon. Mizraim was another of Ham's children and he was the father of the Egyptians (Gen. 10:6 and Ps. 78:51). For a time Babylon and Egypt waxed great, but subsequently both of them were reduced to subjection, first by the Persians who descended from Shem, and later by the Greeks and Romans who were the children of Japheth. And from these early subjugations they have never recovered themselves. The whole of Africa was peopled by the descendants of Ham, and for many centuries the greater part of that continent lay under the dominion of the Romans, Saracens, and Turks. And, as is well known, the Negroes who were for so long the slaves of Europeans and Americans, also claim Ham as their progenitor.

"Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant" (verse 26). Two things are promised here: Jehovah was to be the God of Shem and Canaan was to be his servant. Shem was "the father of all the children of Eber," that is, the Hebrews (Gen. 10:21). Thus, in the Hebrews, the knowledge and worship of God was preserved in the family of Shem. The fulfillment of this part of the prophecy is well known to our readers. God was in a peculiar sense the God of the Hebrews—"And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God" (Ex. 29:45). And again, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth" (Amos 3:2).

"And Canaan shall be his (Shem's) servant." This received its first fulfillment in the days of Joshua—"And Joshua made them (the Gibeonites) hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation" (Josh. 9:27). The following scriptures set forth its further accomplishment: "And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute" (Judges 1:28). "And all the people that were left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, which were not of the children of Israel, their children that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel also were not able utterly to destroy, upon those did Solomon levy a tribute of bond service unto this day" (1 Kings 9: 20, 21).

"God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem" (verse 27). Two things were also predicted of Japheth: first, he should be enlarged; second, he should dwell in the tents of Shem or, in other words, should receive blessing from Shem. The accomplishment of this prediction is witnessed to by history both sacred and secular. Those nations which have been most enlarged by God have descended from Japheth. The Greeks and the Romans who in their time dominated practically all of the then known world; and more recently the European Powers who have entered into the rich possessions of Asia (inhabited by the children of Shem); and, today, the Anglo-Saxon race, which occupies more territory than any other people, are all the descendants of Noah's firstborn! In Genesis 10, where a list of Japheth's sons is found, we read, "By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands."

"And he shall dwell in the tents of Shem" intimates that Japheth was to be Shem's guest, that he should share the rest and shelter of Shem's tabernacles. How remarkably has this prophecy been fulfilled spiritually! "The revelation which we prize is that of the God of Israel; the Savior in whom we trust is the seed of Abraham; the Old Testament was written principally for Israel; and the New Testament though written in a Japhetic tongue, and, therefore for us, was penned by Jewish fingers" (Urquhart). To this may be added the words of our Lord, "Salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22); and that remarkable statement of the Apostle Paul's in Romans 11 where, writing of the Gentiles, he says, "And thou, being a wild olive tree was grafted in among them (Israel), and with them partakes of the root and fatness of the olive tree" (verse 17). Thus do we see Japheth "dwelling in the tents of Shem."

Who but He who knows the end from the beginning could have outlined the whole course of the three great divisions of the postdiluvian race so tersely and so accurately!

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Try to trace the family lines of Shem, Ham and Japheth to find where their descendants are located today.**

Gen. 10:2-5    Gen. 10:6-10    Gen. 10:22-32

**Through whose line did Christ come?**

Luke 3:35    Matt. 3:16, 17

**And through whose line are we – in the natural – and in the spiritual?**

Rom. 5:12-14    2 Cor. 5:17    Col. 1:1-3

**Genesis 10:1-11:32**

In Genesis 10 and 11 we have the historical links, which for us tie in the time of Noah with the days of Abraham. Uninteresting as they may appear to the casual reader, they furnish most valuable information to the prayerful student. Without these two chapters and the genealogies which they contain, we should be quite unable to trace the fulfillment of Noah's wonderful prophecy; we should be without any satisfactory solution to the ethnological problem presented by the variety and number of the different nations and tongues; and, we should be left in ignorance concerning the cause (from the human side) which led up to God abandoning His dealings with the nations and singling out Abram to be the father of His chosen people Israel.

Genesis 10 and 11 give us the history of the postdiluvian world; they show us the ways of men in this new world in revolt against God and seeking to glorify and deify themselves; and they set before us the principles and judgments upon which this world is founded. For the understanding of the chapters it is necessary to pay careful attention to their structure and chronology. Chapter eleven historically antedates much of Genesis 10, furnishing us with a commentary upon it. Verses eight to twelve of chapter ten and verses one to nine of chapter eleven should be read as two parentheses. Reading them thus, we find, that outside of these parentheses, these chapters furnish us with the genealogical descent of Abram from Noah. Upon these genealogies and origins of the various nations we shall not now comment, preferring to dwell at some length on the parenthetical portions.

Like everything else in Genesis, the historical events recorded in these brief parentheses are remarkable in their typical significance and reach. In the clearer and fuller light of the New Testament we cannot fail to see that Nimrod foreshadowed the last great World-Ruler before our Lord descends to earth and ushers in His millennial reign. It is deeply significant that the person and history of Nimrod are here introduced at the point immediately preceding God calling Abram from among the Gentiles and bringing him into the Promised Land. So will it be again in the near future. Just before God gathers Abraham's descendants from out of the lands of the Gentiles (many, perhaps the majority of whom will be found dwelling at that very time in Assyria, —see Isaiah 11:11), there will arise one who will fill out the picture here typically outlined by Nimrod. We refer of course to the Antichrist. As the Antichrist is a subject of such interest and importance—his manifestation being now so near at hand—we digress for a moment to say one or two things about him.

To begin at the beginning. We need not remind our readers that Satan is the avowed and age-long enemy of God and that all through the course of human history he has been opposing his Maker and seeking to secure the scepter of earth's sovereignty. Further, we need not dwell upon the fact, so plainly revealed in Scripture, that Satan is all imitator, parodying and counterfeiting the ways and things of the Lord. But the climax of all Satan's schemes has not yet become history, though the inspired Word shows us clearly what form this climax will assume. God's purposes for this earth are to be realized and consummated in a man, "the man Christ Jesus" who will yet reign over it as King of kings and Lord of lords. Satan's designs will also head up in a man, "the man of Sin" who will for a short season reign over the earth as its acknowledged king. This man will be, preeminently, energized by Satan himself (2 Thess. 2:9). He will assume the right to enforce his autocratic dictates on all alike—"And he causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name" (Rev. 13:16,17). He it was who was before the Psalmist when he said, "He (Christ) (should be Antichrist) shall wound the head over many countries" (Psa. 110:6). He was the one pictured by the prophet when he wrote—"Yea also, because he transgresses by wine, he is a proud man, neither keeps at home, who enlarges his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathers unto him all nations, and heaps unto him all people," etc., see Habakkuk 2:1-8. This Man of Sin (2 Thess. 2:3) will be the superman of whom the world is even now talking about, and for whom it is so rapidly being prepared. He will be the "Lord of Light"—the great Mahatma—for whom Theosophists and Bahaists are looking.

The Antichrist is not only the subject of Old Testament prophecy, but he is also the subject of Old Testament typology. Most of the characters brought before us in Old Testament history are types of one of two men—the Christ or the Antichrist. Much attention has been paid to those personages which foreshadowed our blessed Lord, but much less thought has been devoted to the consideration of those who prefigured the Man of Sin. A wide field here lies open for investigation, and we doubt not that as his appearing draws nigh the Holy Spirit will furnish additional light on this little studied subject.

One of those who foreshadowed the Antichrist was Nimrod. In at least seven particulars can the analogy be clearly traced. First: his very name describes that which will be the most prominent characteristic of all in the one whom he typifies. "Nimrod" means "the Rebel," reminding us of one of the titles of the Antichrist, found in 2 Thessalonians 2:8—"The Lawless One"—R. V. Second: the form which Nimrod's rebellion assumed was to head a great confederacy in open revolt against God. This confederacy is described in Genesis eleven and that it was an organized revolt against Jehovah is clear from the language of Genesis 10:9—"Nimrod, the mighty hunter before the Lord," which (as we shall see) means that he pushed his own designs in brazen defiance of his Maker. Thus it will be with the Antichrist; of him it is written, "And the King shall do according to his will, and he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god (ruler), and shall speak marvelous things against the God of Gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished; for that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god, for he shall magnify himself above all" (Dan. 11:36, 37). Third: four times over the word "mighty" is used to describe Nimrod. Here again we are reminded of the Lawless One of whom it is said, "Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders" (2 Thess. 2:9). Fourth: Nimrod was a "hunter" (Gen. 10:9), probably a hunter of men. This is precisely what the Lawless one will be. In Psalm 5:6 he is denominated "the bloody and deceitful man." Fifth: Nimrod was a "king"—the beginning of his kingdom was Babel (Gen. 10:10), and, as we have seen in Daniel 11:36 the Antichrist is also termed "king" Sixth: Nimrod's headquarters were in Babylon, see Genesis 10:10 and 11:1-9; so also, we find the Man of Sin is called "the king of Babylon" (Isa. 14:4), and in the Apocalypse he is connected with "mystery Babylon" (Rev. 17:3-5) Seventh: Nimrod's supreme ambition and desire was to make to himself a name. He had an inordinate desire for fame. Here, too the antitype (that which was foreshadowed) agrees with the type (a shadow of what was to come). "Pride" is spoken of as the condemnation of the Devil: it was an impious ambition which brought about his downfall. The Man of Sin will be fully possessed by Satan, hence, an insatiable pride will possess him. It is this Satanic egotism which will cause him to oppose and "exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (2 Thess. 2:4).

We have now prepared a brief exposition of the two parenthetical portions of Genesis 10 and 11.

"And Cush begat Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one in the earth" (Gen. 10:8). The first thing we note here is that Nimrod was a descendant of Ham, through Cush; in other words, he sprang from that branch of Noah's family on which rested the "curse." Next, we observe that it is said, "he began to be mighty," which seems to suggest the idea that he struggled for the preeminence, and by mere force of will obtained it. Finally, we observe that he "began to be mighty in

the earth." The intimation appears to be that of conquest or subjugation, as though he became a leader and ruler over men, as indeed he did.

"He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord" (Gen. 10:9). In so brief a description the repetition of these words, "mighty hunter before the Lord" are significant. Three times in Genesis 10 and again in 1 Chronicles 1:10 the word "mighty" is applied to Nimrod. The Hebrew word is "gibbor," and is translated in the old Testament "chief" and "chieftain." The verse in Chronicles is in perfect agreement with these in Genesis—"And Cush begat Nimrod; he began to be mighty upon the earth." The Chaldeen paraphrase of this verse says, "Cush begat Nimrod who began to prevail in wickedness, for he slew innocent blood and rebelled against Jehovah." Observe, "a mighty hunter before the Lord." If we compare this expression with a similar one in Genesis 6:11—"The earth also (in the days of Noah) was corrupt before God," the impression conveyed is that this "Rebel" pursued his own impious and ambitious designs in brazen and open defiance of the Almighty. As we shall see, the contents of Genesis eleven confirm this interpretation.

"And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel" (Genesis 10:10). Here is the key to the first nine verses of the eleventh chapter. Here we have the first mention of Babel, and like the first mention of anything in Scripture this one demands careful consideration. In the language of that time Babel meant "the gate of God" but afterwards, because of the judgments which God inflicted there, it came to mean "Confusion," and from here onwards this is its force or meaning. By coupling together the various hints which the Holy Spirit has here given us we learn that Nimrod organized not only an imperial government over which he presided as king, but that he instituted a new and idolatrous worship. If the type (foreshadow) is perfect, and we believe it is, then as the Lawless One will yet do, Nimrod demanded and received Divine honors; in all probability it is just here that we have the introduction of idolatry. Here, again, we learn how wonderfully the first mention of anything in Scripture defines its future scope; from this point Babylon in Scripture stands for that which is in opposition to God and His people—it was a Babylonish garment (Josh. 7:21) which led to the first sin in the promised land, while from Revelation 17 we learn that Romanism, which will gather into itself the whole of apostate Christendom, is termed "Mystery Babylon."

Out of that land he went forth into Assyria (marginal rendering) and built Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, and Resen, between Nineveh and Calah; the same is a great city" (Gen. 10:11,12). From these statements we gather the impression that Nimrod's ambition was to establish a world-empire. But we must turn now to the next chapter, asking our readers to study carefully the first nine verses in the light of what we have said above. "And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there" (11:1, 2). These geographical and topographical references have a moral force, just as we read of "going down to Egypt," but "up to Jerusalem." Here we are told that men journeyed "from the east," i.e., turned their backs upon the sunrise. Note further, "a plain (not a "mountain") in the land of Shinar."

Nimrod is not mentioned at all in Genesis 11, but from the statements made in the previous chapter we learn that he was the "chief" and "king" which organized and headed the movement and rebellion here described.

"And they said, Go to, let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth" (11:4). Here we discover a most blatant defiance of God, a deliberate refusal to obey His command given through Noah. He had said, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" (Gen. 9:1); but they said, "Let us make us a name lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."

As we have seen, Nimrod's ambition was to establish a world-empire. To accomplish this two things were necessary. First, a center of unity, a city headquarters; and second, a motive for the encouragement and inspiration of his followers. This latter was supplied in the "let us make us a name." It was an inordinate desire for fame. Nimrod's aim was to keep mankind all together under his own leadership "lest we be scattered." "The idea of the "tower" (considered in the light of its setting) seems to be that of strength—a stronghold—rather than eminence.

"And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth; and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel (Confusion); because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth, and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth" (11:6-9). Another crisis had arrived in the history of the world. Once again the human race was guilty of the sin of apostasy. Therefore did God intervene, brought Nimrod's schemes to naught by confounding the speech of his subjects and scattered them throughout the earth. Here was one of the mightiest and most far-reaching miracles of history. It finds no parallel until the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost when another miracle of "tongues" was performed. The effect of God's intervention was the origination of the different nations and after the destruction of the Tower of Babel we get the formation of the "world" as we now have it. At this point the nations were abandoned to their own devices—"God gave them up" (Rom. 1)—but not until the race had twice enjoyed a revelation of God's mercy (first to Adam and then to Noah) and had twice forsaken Him before and after the Deluge.

To sum up. In Nimrod and his schemes we see Satan's initial attempt to raise up a universal ruler of men. In his inordinate desire for fame, in the mighty power which he wielded, in his ruthless and brutal methods—suggested by the word "hunter," in his blatant defiance of the Creator, (seen in his utter disregard for His command to replenish the earth,)



by determining to prevent his subjects from being scattered abroad; in his founding of the kingdom of Babylon—the Gate of God—thus arrogating (appropriating) to himself Divine honors; inasmuch as the Holy Spirit has placed the record of these things immediately before the inspired account of God's bringing Abram into Canaan—pointing forward to the re-gathering of Israel in Palestine immediately after the overthrow of the Lawless One; and finally, in the fact that the destruction of his kingdom is described in the words, "Let Us go down and there confound their language" (11:7—foreshadowing so marvelously the descent of Christ from Heaven to vanquish His impious Rival, we cannot fail to see that there is here, beneath the historical narrative, something deeper than that which appears on the surface; yea, that there is here a complete typical picture of the person, work and destruction of the Antichrist.)

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Arthur W. Pink wrote the above around 1948 and much history has transpired since then. **If possible, add any progressive knowledge you may have that follows Pink's teaching concerning Noah's descendants and also the revealing (prophecy) of the Antichrist. Should people today know and understand this Genesis background in order to fully grasp God's great plan for all people and nations that is being unveiled today?**

### **Genesis 12:1-9**

Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house unto a land that I will show thee" (Gen. 12:1). As we have seen from Acts 7:3, this call from God came to Abram at his home in Mesopotamia. It was a call which demanded absolute confidence in and obedience to the word of Jehovah. It was a call of separation from the ties of the natural man. This is a marked advance upon that which we studied in connection with our previous patriarch. The connection between the histories and experiences of Noah and Abraham is most instructive. Noah passing through the judgment of the old world and coming forth upon a new earth, represents the acceptance of the believer in Christ, with a new standing ground before God. Abram called upon to separate himself from his home and kindred and bidden to go out into a place which afterwards God would give him for an inheritance, typifies the one whose citizenship is in heaven but who is still in the world, and in consequence is called upon to walk by faith and live as a stranger and pilgrim on the earth. In a word, Abram illustrates the heavenly calling of those who are members of the body of Christ.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**By taking Lot with him, did Abraham fully obey God's command?**

**Using this passage and Hebrews 11:8-10, speak about the mindset Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had to have.**

**Abraham's faith earned him a glorious title; what was it?**

Jas. 2:23

### **Genesis 12:10-20**

"And there was famine in the land; and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land" (v.10). This is the first mention in scripture of Egypt, and like all its subsequent references, so here, it stands for that which is a constant menace to the people of God, symbolizing, as it does, alliance with the world and reliance upon the arm of flesh—"Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord!" (Isa. 31:1).

The famine was sent as a trial of Abram's faith. A famine in the Land of Promise. What a test of faith! "God would see whether he had such confidence in His goodness that even famine could not shake it. Alas, Abram did as we are all prone to do, he sought relief from all his difficulties, rather than profit by the trial" (Ridout). Observe that when this famine came there was no seeking counsel from the Lord. Abram was prompted by the wisdom of the flesh which ever suggests relief in means and human help, in fact, anything rather than in the living God. O, the inconsistencies of God's children! Faith in God with regard to our eternal interest, but afraid to confide in Him for the supply of our temporal needs. Here it is a man who had journeyed all the way from Chaldea to Canaan on the bare word of Jehovah and yet was now afraid to trust Him in the time of famine. Sad that it should be so, but how like us today!

One sin leads to another. Failure in our love to God always results in failure in our love to our neighbor. Down in Egypt Abram practices deception and denies that Sarai is his wife, thus endangering the honor of the one who was nearest and should have been dearest to him. Alas! What is man? But Jehovah would not allow His purposes to be frustrated—"If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful; He cannot deny Himself" (2 Tim. 2:13). So it was here. The Lord interposed—"And the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife" (v. 17).

The sequel is found in the next chapter "And Abram went up out of Egypt, he and his wife, and all that he had and he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first, and there Abram called on the name of the Lord" (Gen. 13:1, 3, 4). He returned to the very place he had left. He repented and "did the first works." Abram's sojourn in Egypt was so much lost time.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Elaborate on how believers are also called to step out in simple and unquestioning faith, to separate themselves from the world to a life of pilgrimage, in dependency upon Jehovah. Are Christians to look for a permanent home here, or for a Continuing City not made with hands?**

2 Tim. 2:13 Heb. 13:12-15

**Can we expect times of testing as Abraham did?**

1 Pet. 1:6-9 1 Pet. 4:1, 2, 12-14

### **Genesis 13:1-13**

In our last article we followed Abraham from Ur of Chaldea to Haran, and from Haran to Canaan. We saw that after he had arrived in the land to which God called him, a famine arose, and then his faith failing him in the hour of crisis, Abraham, accompanied by Lot, sought refuge in Egypt. Our present study reveals some of the results of the patriarch's backsliding. While God, in faithfulness and grace, restored His wandering child, yet the effects of his departure from the path of faith were manifested soon afterwards and continued to harass him the remainder of his days. The principle of sowing and reaping is of universal application, and is true of believers equally as much as unbelievers. Two things Abraham obtained from his sojourn in Egypt, each of which proved a hindrance and curse, though in the end both were overruled by God for His own glory. We refer to them here in the inverse order of their mention in Genesis.

"And Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband, Abram, to be his wife" (Gen. 16:3). During their stay in Egypt, Sarai took unto her the maid, Hagar. The strife, the jealousy, the trouble which Hagar introduced into the patriarch's household is well known; the climax of it all being seen in Ishmael (Hagar's son) "mocking Isaac" (Gen. 21:9) and his subsequent expulsion from Abram's tent.

The second thing which Abraham seems to have obtained in Egypt was great earthly possessions—"And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south. And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold" (Gen. 13:1, 2). This is the first time we read of Abram's "cattle," and it is deeply significant that shortly afterwards these very flocks and herds became the occasion of strife between him and his nephew. It also deserves to be noticed that this is the first mention of "riches" in Scripture, and, as now, so then, they pierced their possessor through with "many sorrows" (1 Tim. 6:10).

"And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents" (Gen. 13:5). Till now we hear nothing of Lot since he left Haran, but he appears to have been one of Abram's family and to have gone with him wherever he went. The characters and careers of Abram and Lot present a series of sharp antitheses. Throughout the biographical portions of Scripture we find the Holy Spirit frequently brings together two men of widely different character and placing them in juxtaposition so that we might the better earn the salutary lessons He would teach us. Abel and Cain, Moses and Aaron, Samuel and Saul, David and Solomon, are well known examples of this principle. In almost every respect Lot compares unfavorably with Abram. Abram walked by faith, Lot by sight. Abram was generous and magnanimous; Lot greedy and worldly. Abram looked for a city whose builder and maker was God; Lot made his home in a city that was built by man and destroyed by God. Abram was the father of all who believe; Lot was father of those whose name is a perpetual infamy. Abram was made "heir of the world" (Rom. 4:3), while the curtain falls upon Lot with all his possessions destroyed in Sodom, and himself "dwelling in a cave" (Gen. 19:30).

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**To what place did Abraham return after leaving Egypt? And, according to Scripture, what was the first thing he did there? Of what significance was this?**

**In time to come, this city became known as Abraham's city, where his name was highly honored down through the years. In our recent history, what has this city suffered, attested to by our daily newspapers and television reports?**

**Describe what Lot saw when he looked upon the land. This Scripture tells us two things to which this land was compared—what were they? And what does this tell us about Lot and his choices?**

## **Genesis 13:14-18**

At last the purpose of God is realized. God "called him alone" (Isa. 51:2). He had said "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee" (Acts 7:3), but to this command Abram had rendered but a tardy and partial obedience. Both his father and nephew accompanied him as he left Chaldea, and instead of journeying straight to Canaan, he stopped short at Haran where he "dwelt" until the death of Terah (11:31,32). Yet even now the Divine command was not fully obeyed—into the land of God's call Abram came, Lot still with him.

But now, at the point we have reached, Lot has taken his departure and Abram (with Sarai) is left alone with God. And is it not deeply significant that not until now did the Lord say, "For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever" (v. 15). Observe carefully the ascending scale in God's promises to Abram. In Chaldea God promised to "show" Abram the land (Gen. 12:1). Then, when Abram had actually entered it and arrived at Shechem the Lord promised to "give" the land unto his seed—"And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land" (12:7). But now—now that he is at last separated from the last of his "kindred"—God promises to give "all the land" unto Abram himself. Furthermore, it is to be noted that not until now does God say to Abram, "Arise, walk through the land in the length of it, and in the breadth of it" (v. 17), which intimated that God would have Abram appropriate the gift. Abram was to "feel at home" in the land as though the title deeds of it were already in his hands. Do we not discover in all this a striking illustration of an all important principle in God's dealings with His own people—how often our unbelief limits the outflow of Divine grace! An imperfect and circumscribed obedience prevents our enjoying much that God has for us. As a further illustration compare and contrast Caleb and the inheritance which he obtained for "following the Lord fully" (Num.14:24).

In the words "Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it" (v. 17) another important truth is suggested—appropriation. It was as though God had said to Abram, I have called you into this land, I have given it to you and your seed, now enjoy it. He was to travel through it, to look upon it as already his—his by faith, for he had God's word for it. As another has said, "He was to act towards it as if he were already in absolute possession." And is not this what God invites His people to do today? We, too, have received a call to separate ourselves from the world. We, too, have been begotten unto an inheritance, an inheritance which is "incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven." And now we, too, are bidden to "walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it." In other words, we are called to the exercise of faith; to look not at the things that are seen, but at the things which are unseen; to set our affection upon things above, and not upon things below. In brief, we are to make it our own, to appropriate and enjoy the things which God has promised us. It is unbelief which hinders us from enjoying to the full what is already ours in the purpose of God. Mark that word through the prophet Obadiah, "But upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions" (v. 17). In the Millennium Israel will fully possess their possessions. We say "fully possess" for they have never done so in the past. And why? Because of unbelief. Then let us fear, lest there be in us also an evil heart of unbelief.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Describe how Abraham had matured in spiritual obedience unto God up to this point? Are his lessons becoming the Lord's teaching for you also?**

## **Genesis 14:1-16**

Genesis 14 opens with a brief account of the first war mentioned in Scripture. The outcome of the conflict was the capture of Lot and his possessions (v. 12). As another has said, "He had laid up treasures for himself on earth, and the thieves had broken through." One who had escaped brought intelligence to Abram that his nephew had been captured.

It is beautiful to observe the effect of this intelligence upon our patriarch. Abram was not indifferent to his nephew's well-being. There was no root of bitterness in him. There was no callous, "Well, this is none of my doing: he must reap what he has sown." Promptly he goes to the aid of the one in distress. But note it was not in the energy of the flesh that he acted. It was no mere tie of nature that prompted Abram here—"When Abram heard that his brother (not his 'nephew') was taken captive." A brother—a spiritual brother—was in need, and so he "armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan" (14:14). And has this no voice for us today? Surely the spiritual application is obvious. How often is a "brother" taken captive by the enemy, and the word comes, "Ye, which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1). But only too often the call falls upon ears that are dull of hearing. Only too often, our prided separation from evil leads to independence and indifference. Alas! That is not as it should be. How different from our blessed Lord, who leaves the ninety and nine and goes after the sheep that has strayed, and rests not until it is found and restored!

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Chedorlaomer was the Napoleon of his day so it took a real act of faith for Abraham to stand up to such opposition. Before Abraham went to battle he no doubt was aware that if he defeated Chedorlaomer and preserved Lot and his

family, there was a strong possibility of retribution against him since this group of kings were a minority force. **When we are asked to perform a difficult task, where do we get the confidence, courage, energy and ability to complete it?**

Phil. 1:6-11

**Would you say Abraham was a type (foreshadow) of Christ in this situation? And who does Lot exemplify? Explain.**

**Relate how Lot managed to get himself into such a fearful and nearly hopeless situation, beginning with his choices in chapter 13. What warning is this to us today?**

### Genesis 14:17-20

In the words "made like unto the Son of God" (Heb. 7:3) we have the key to the mystery which centers around Melchizedek. Melchizedek was a *type of Christ (foreshadow of Christ)*, and particularly a type of our Lord's priesthood. There are other points of resemblance which we shall consider below, but the first point of analogy between Melchizedek and the Son of God singled out by the Holy Spirit in Hebrews 7 is that he is "without father, without mother, without descendant, having neither beginning of days nor end of life." This does not mean that Melchizedek was a supernatural, a divine being, but that *he is presented to us in the Old Testament as without father or mother, etc.* In other words, the *silence* of the Old Testament Scriptures concerning his parentage has a designed significance. The entire *omission* of any reference to Melchizedek's ancestry, birth or death, was ordered by the Holy Spirit (who "moved" Moses both in what he inserted and what he left out of the Genesis narrative) in order to present a perfect *type* of the Lord Jesus. No information concerning the genealogy of Melchizedek is recorded in Genesis, which is a book that abounds in genealogies. This is an instance where speech is silver and silence golden. The silence was in order that there might be a nearer approximation between the type (foreshadow) and the glorious antitype (that which was foreshadowed).

Not only was Melchizedek a type of our Lord in the fact that he is presented to us in Genesis as being "without father, without mother," but also in a number of other important particulars. Melchizedek was a priest—"the priest of the Most High God" (Gen. 14:18). But not only so, he was a king—"King of Salem" and therefore a royal priest. In the person of Melchizedek the offices of priest and king were combined, and thus was he a notable type of our great High Priest who according to the flesh was not of the tribe of Levi, but of the tribe of Judah, the royal tribe (see Heb. 7:14). Not only was Melchizedek a type of the royal priesthood of Christ by virtue of his office as King of Salem (which means "peace") but his name also had a typical significance. "Melchizedek" means "King of Righteousness." Here again there is a wonderful and blessed bringing together of things which out of Christ are divorced. Not only did Melchizedek combine in his person the offices of king and priest, but in his titles he united righteousness and peace. Melchizedek was both king of righteousness and king of peace and thus did he foreshadow the blessed result of the Cross-work of our adorable Lord, for it was at the Cross that "mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other" (Ps. 85:10).

Observe the order of mention in Hebrews 7:2, "to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; *first being* by interpretation King of Righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of Peace." This is ever God's order. God cannot be at peace with guilty rebels until the claims of His throne have been met. Only upon a righteous basis can peace be established. "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever" (Isa. 32:17). This is unfolded at length in the Epistle to the Romans, and particularly in Romans 3:21-26, God's righteousness was "declared" at the Cross where the Lord Jesus made propitiation and fully satisfied every demand of the thrice holy God. There it is that the great "work of righteousness" was accomplished, the effect of which is peace. As it is written, "Having made peace through the blood of His Cross" (Col. 1:20). The benefits of this accrue to the believer through the channel of faith, for "being justified (pronounced righteous) by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). The same order is found again in Romans 14:17—"For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Spirit."

In Hebrews 7:4 attention is called to the *greatness* of this man Melchizedek, his "greatness" being recognized and acknowledged by Abraham who "gave him tithes." In this also he is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, our "*great* High Priest"—the only Priest so denominated in the Scriptures. The greatness of our Lord's priesthood inheres (belongs) in His intrinsic glory which is in contrast with the feebleness of the perishable priests of the Levitical order who could not save. Two things prominently characterized the Levitical priests: first, they were personally unclean, and therefore needed to "offer for their *own* sins" (Heb. 7:27); and second, they were mortal, and therefore death put an end to their ministrations. Now in contradistinction, not only is our great High Priest sinless, but He is made "after the power of an endless life" (Heb. 7:16), and hence it is written concerning Christ, "Thou art a priest *for ever* after the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. 7:21).

It is important to remark here that it is as risen and ascended that the Lord Jesus has received the eternal excellency of the Melchizedek title. His never-ending ministry of *blessing* dates its effectual beginning from the finished work of the Cross. Here again we note the accuracy of our type, for not only is the Genesis narrative silent concerning the origin of Melchizedek, but it *makes no mention of his death*.

Finally, it is to be noted that Melchizedek is termed "priest of *the Most High God*" (Gen. 14:18), a title which looks beyond all national relationships. Here is the final contrast between the two orders of priesthood the Melchizedekian and the Aaronic. Aaron's priestly ministry never transcended the limits of Israel, and he was ever the priest of Jehovah as the God of *Israel*. But Melchizedek was priest of Jehovah under His more comprehensive title of the *Most High God*, "*Possessor of heaven and earth*" (Gen. 14:19), and therefore Melchizedek foreshadowed the *millennial glory* of Christ when "He shall be a *priest upon His throne*" (Zech. 6:13) and reign in righteousness and peace. As it is written, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called The Lord Our Righteousness" (Jer. 23:5, 6). Then shall the Divine Melchizedek rule as King of Righteousness and King of Peace. As it is written again, "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The *Prince of Peace*. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His Kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice (*righteousness*) from henceforth even for ever" (Isa. 9:6, 7).

That Melchizedek foreshadowed the *millennial glory* of Christ is further to be seen from *the occasion* when he appeared before Abram. The typical picture is wonderfully complete. Melchizedek met Abram as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings, having rescued from them his nephew Lot who foreshadows the Jewish remnant in the tribulation period. Then it was that Melchizedek met Abram and *blessed* him (Gen. 14:19). Thus it will be when our Lord returns to usher in the Millennium. He will overthrow the Beast and his forces in this same "King's dale (valley)," deliver Israel out of their hands and bless the descendants of Abraham, and just as Abram acknowledged the superiority of Melchizedek by paying him tithes, so will Israel acknowledge their Divine Melchizedek and own Him as their Priest and King.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Here list the various ways in which Melchizedek was a type or prefigure of our Lord.** The key to the mystery of Melchizedek is that he was "made like unto the Son of God." His person and his titles strongly foreshadowed what our Lord accomplished at the cross, for at the cross "Mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other" (Ps. 85:10).

Ps. 110:4    Heb. 5:5, 6, 10    Heb. 7:1-27    Heb. 8:1, 2, 6

### **Genesis 14:21-24**

"And the King of Sodom said unto Abram, give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself " (Gen. 14:21). In the King of Sodom's offer we may discover one of the "wiles" of the devil for we are not ignorant of his "devices." The world is only too ready to offer God's children its subsidies so as to bring them under obligation to itself. But Abram was preeminently a man of faith and faith is "the victory that overcomes the world" (1 John 5:4).

"And Abram said to the King of Sodom, I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord, the Most High God, the Possessor of heaven and earth. That I will take nothing, from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich.' Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion" (14:22-24). What noble words were these! With quiet dignity our patriarch refuses to be dependent in any way upon the King of Sodom—what a contrast was Balaam and the offer made him by Balak! Abram knew that in heaven he had a "better and an enduring substance" (Heb. 10:34). The words, "I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord" (compare Deut. 32:40) signify a vow or solemn oath, and seem to show that when he started out in pursuit of Lot's captors he promised the Lord that if He would give him success he would not enrich himself by his campaign; but it is beautiful to note that he did not forget or overlook the claims of those who had accompanied him and shared his perils. In the giving of tithes to Melchizedek, priest of the Most High God, Abram acknowledged God's grace in giving him the victory.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Abram held the offer of the King of Sodom in great contempt rather than succumb to his temptation. **Tell us what was the higher and richer influence to whom he preferred to give his obedience. Does this also become a parallel to the temptation of our Lord in the wilderness, when Satan offered Him all the kingdoms of the world for one act of obeisance? (Matt. 4:1-11) Is this a profound lesson for us also, when the world tries to tantalize us with its fake, though glamorous gold, and pretentious high prospects? (Prov. 16:8; Heb. 13:5)**

### **Genesis 15:1**

The connecting link between our present portion of Scripture and the one which we took for the basis of meditation in our last chapter is found in the opening words of Genesis 15—"After these things the Word of the Lord came unto Abram

in a vision." Chedorlaomer, the King of Elam, had united his forces to those of three other kings in a league of conquest. Their military prowess seemed irresistible. The Rephaim, the Zuzim, the Emim, the Horites, the Amalekites and the Amorites were each defeated in turn (Gen. 14:5-7). Five kings with their forces now combined and went forth to engage the armies of Chedorlaomer, but they also were overthrown, and in consequence the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were sacked and Lot was taken prisoner. Then it was that Abram went forth at the head of his three hundred and eighteen armed servants and by a surprise night attack gained a signal victory. Chedorlaomer was slain, Lot was delivered, and the booty taken from Sodom and Gomorrah was recovered.

And now came the reaction, mental and physical. Abram had good reason to conclude that the remaining followers of the powerful King of Elam would not abandon the enterprise which had only been frustrated by a surprise attack at night—made by an insignificant force—but instead, would return and avenge their reverse. In defeating Chedorlaomer and his allies, Abram had made some bitter and influential foes. It was not likely that they would rest content until the memory of their reverse had been wiped out with blood. They who had been strong enough to capture the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were too powerful to be set at defiance by Abram and his little colony. Thus alarmed and apprehensive Abram now receives a special word of reassurance: "After these things the Word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield." Thus in tender grace did Jehovah quiet the troubled heart of the one whom He was pleased to call His "friend."

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**"Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Regarding this tremendous promise given to our forefather, what is the full meaning of the last phrase—"thy exceeding great reward?" May we claim it as our promise too—those of us who are His by faith?**

Gen. 13:9, 14, 15    Gen. 14:21-23    Gen. 26:24    Ex. 3:11-15    Deut. 33:29    Ps. 16:5    Prov. 3:5, 6    Prov. 11:18    Rom. 8:15-17    Eph. 1:5, 11    Phil. 4:13, 19    Heb. 11:25-26

### **Genesis 15:2-6**

And now we come to those words which have been so precious unto multitudes: "And he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness" (v.6). A full exposition of this verse would lead us far beyond the limits of our present space, so we content ourselves with a few brief comments, referring the reader to Romans 4 for God's own exposition.

Literally rendered our verse reads, "And he stayed himself upon the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness." At the time God promised Abram that his heir should be one who came forth from his own bowels, Abram's body was "as good as dead" (Heb. 11:12), nevertheless, he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that what He had promised, He was able also to perform" (Rom. 4:20, 21). Abram reasoned not about the natural impossibility that lay in the way of the realization of the promise, but believed that God would act just as He had said. God had spoken and that was enough. His own body might be dead and Sarah long past the age of child-bearing, nevertheless he was fully assured that God had power even to quicken the dead. And this faith was reckoned or counted unto him for righteousness; not that faith is accepted by God in lieu of righteousness as an equivalent for righteousness, else would faith be a meritorious thing, but that faith is the recipient of that righteousness by which we are justified. The force of the preposition is "unto" rather than "instead of"—it was "counted to him unto righteousness." Abram's case was a representative one. Today justification (to be declared righteous) is by faith, but with this important difference—that whereas Abram believed God would give him a son through the quickening of his body, we believe that God has given us His Son, and through His death and quickening from the dead a Savior is ours through faith.

Just here we would pause to consider what seems to have proven a real difficulty to expositors and commentators. Was not Abram a "believer" years before the point of time contemplated in Genesis 15:6? Not a few have suggested that prior to this incident Abram was in a condition similar to that of Cornelius before Peter preached to him. But are we not expressly told that it was "By faith" (Heb. 11:8) he had left Ur of the Chaldees and went out "not knowing whither he went!" Yet, why are we here told that "he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness?" Surely the answer is not far to seek. It is true that in the New Testament the Holy Spirit informs us that Abram was a believer when he left Chaldea, but his faith is not there (i.e., Heb. 11:8) mentioned in connection with his justification. Instead, in the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians the incident which the Holy Spirit singles out as the occasion when Abram's faith was counted for righteousness is the one in Genesis 15 now before us. And why? Because in Genesis 15 Abram's faith is directly connected with God's promise respecting his "seed," which "seed" was Christ (see Gal. 3:16)! The faith which was "counted for righteousness" was the faith which believed what God had said concerning the promised Seed. It was this instance of Abram's faith which the Holy Spirit was pleased to select as the model for believing unto justification. There is no justification apart from Christ. "Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. And by Him all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts 13: 38, 39). Therefore we say it was not that Abram here "believed God" for the first time, but that here God was pleased to openly attest his righteousness for the first time, and that for the reason stated above. Though Christians may believe God with respect to the common concerns of this life, such faith, while it

evidences they have been justified, is not the faith by which they were justified—the faith which justifies has to do directly with the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the character of Abram's faith in Genesis 15; he believed the promise of God which pointed to Christ. Hence it is in Genesis 15 and not in Genesis 12 we read, "And He counted it to him for righteousness." How perfect are the ways of God!

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Abraham's earlier trials in faith brought him to this point of believing the impossible because it was God's divine promise. **Would you say Abraham allowed the grace of God to give him the faith to believe? If so explain.**

Matt. 21:21 Rom. 4:17, 21

### **Genesis 15:7-11**

"And He said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to *inherit*" (v. 7). Abraham now ventures to ask for a sign by which he may know that by his posterity, he *shall* inherit the land. "And he said, Lord God, *whereby* shall I *know* that I shall inherit it?" (v. 8). We do not regard this question from Abram as arising from unbelief, but that having just been granted (v. 5) a sign or view of a numerous offspring he now desires a further sign or pledge by way of explanation. And now the Lord answers by putting *Christ*, in type, before him.

"And He said unto him, Take Me a heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another, but the birds divided he not. And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away" (vs. 9-11). The typical picture is wonderfully complete. "Take Me," observe, for the sacrifice belongs to, is for *God*. It has been pointed out by another that each of three animals named here were tame ones, not willing and needing to be captured by Abram; instead, they were the willing servants of man's need. Each one foreshadowed a distinctive aspect of Christ's perfections and work. The heifer of three years seems to have pointed to the freshness of his vigor; the goat, gave the sin-offering aspect; the ram is the animal that in the Levitical offerings was connected specially with consecration. The birds told of One from *Heaven*. The "three years," thrice repeated, suggested perhaps the *time* of our Lord's sacrifice, offered after "three years" of service! Note that death passed upon them all, for without shedding of blood is no remission and where no remission is there can be no inheritance. The "dividing" of the animals indicated that this sacrifice was to form the basis for a *covenant* (cf. Jer. 34:18,19).

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

This great Covenant is a true manifestation of God—He alone makes the Blood Covenant; it is His initiative and His giving. Man cannot partake, since the creature has nothing to offer God, His Creator. Even his breath is a gift of God, and his sin makes him unworthy to walk as one with the Holy One.

Abram indeed received a great revelation from Jehovah God—he, Abram, was put to sleep, and he saw Another take his place and walk through the pieces (v. 17). Abram witnessed this Covenant to bless him with the land, and with a son, but beside this, through his seed (God's Son) He would bring about His redemptive purposes in and for all the world. This dramatic act prefigures the precious gift of His own Son who condescended to die on a degrading cross for all humanity.

The dividing of the animals down the middle indicated that this sacrifice was to form the basis for a covenant between two parties (Jer. 34:18-20). This covenant was carried out in the face of opposition (the fowls). Abram showed an energy of faith by driving them away, and this was his only part in the covenant. Believers, too, have authority to drive away Satan's opposition. **What are the meaning and the application for us in driving away the fowls from the sacrifice?**

1 Pet. 5:8-9

### **Genesis 15:12-21**

"And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him. And He said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years" (vs. 12, 13). A profound truth is here taught us in type. Abram now learns that the inheritance can be reached only through suffering! His heirs would have to pass through the furnace before they entered into that which God had prepared for them. In the "deep sleep" and the "horror of great darkness" Abram, as it were, entered in spirit into death, as that through which all his seed would have to pass ere they experienced God's deliverance after the death of the Paschal Lamb. First the suffering, the four hundred years "affliction," and then the inheritance. How this reminds us again of Romans 8:17! "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." And again: "We must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22). Thus it was with our blessed Lord—first the "sufferings" and then "the glory." We call attention to the wonderful and perfect order of the typical teaching here: first, the sacrifice (v. 9);

second, "thy seed"—sons (v. 13); third, suffering—"affliction" (v. 13); fourth, entering into the inheritance—"come hither again" (v. 16). How complete the typical picture!

"And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him" (v. 12). By this *deep* sleep we learn how God was showing the patriarch, symbolically, that not during his *natural* life would he inherit the land; instead, he must go down into the grave and inherit it *together with* the Promised Seed. In his awaking from this "deep sleep" Abram received a veiled promise of *resurrection* from the dead and the horror of great darkness as of the grave (cf. Heb. 2:15) from which he was recalled again to the light of day. In a word, the way to blessing, to the inheritance, was through death and resurrection.

"And He said unto Abram, know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years. And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full" (vs. 13-16). These verses contain a *sevenfold prophecy* which received a literal and complete fulfillment. It had reference to the sojourn of Abram's descendants in the land of Egypt, their bondage there, and their deliverance and return to Canaan. We can do little more now than outline the divisions of this compound prophecy. First, Abram's descendants were to be strangers in a land not theirs (v. 13). Second, in that strange land they were to "serve" (v. 13). Third, they were to be "afflicted" four hundred years (v. 13)—note that Exodus 12:40 views the *entire* "sojourning" of the children of Israel in Egypt. They "dwelt" in Egypt four hundred and thirty years, but were "afflicted" for only four hundred years of that time. Fourth, the nation whom Abram's descendants "served" God would "judge" (v. 14). Fifth, Abram's offspring were to come out of Egypt with "great substance" (v. 14), cf. Ps. 105: 37. Sixth, Abram himself was to be spared these afflictions—he should die in peace and be buried in a good old age (v. 15). Seventh, in the "fourth generation" Abram's descendants would return again to Canaan (v. 16). We take it that our readers are sufficiently well acquainted with the book of Exodus to know how wonderfully this prophecy was fulfilled, but we would point out here how accurately the *seventh* item was realized. By comparing Exodus 6:16-26 we find that it was exactly in the "*fourth* generation" that the children of Israel left Egypt and returned to Canaan. In this particular example the first generation was Levi, the son of Jacob, who entered Egypt at the time his father and brethren did (Ex. 6:16). The second generation was Kohath (Ex. 6:16), who was a son of Levi. The third generation was Amran, son of Kohath (Ex. 6:18). And the *fourth* generation brings us to Moses and Aaron, who were the sons of Amram (Ex. 6:20), and these were the ones who led Israel out of Egypt!

"And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces" (v. 17). Much is suggested here which we have to pass by. The "smoking furnace" and the "burning lamp" symbolized the two leading features of the *history* of Abram's descendants. For the "furnace" see Jeremiah 11:3, 4, etc.; for the "burning lamp" see 2 Samuel 22:29; Psalm 119:105; Isaiah 62:1, etc. Note a "smoking furnace *and* a burning lamp." Did not this teach Abram that in Israel's sufferings God would be *with them*; and that in all their afflictions, He would be afflicted, too?

"In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt, unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (v. 18). The covenant which God here made with Abram was based upon death, typically, the death of Christ. This covenant, based on sacrifice, was made by the Lord Himself; it concerned the land; and was absolutely unconditional. It has never yet been completely fulfilled. Note carefully its wording—"Unto thy seed *have I given* this land." Contrast these words with Genesis 13:15—"For all the land which thou seest to thee *will I give it.*" But now a sacrifice had been offered, blood had been shed, the purchase price had been paid, and hence the change from "I will" to "I have."

(*Gleanings In Genesis*, A. W. Pink)

From Joshua 21:43-45 we can see the promise spoken of in these verses in Genesis were fulfilled. **What do you think the reason was that God allowed the Israelites to be in subjection to the Egyptians for four generations and why do you think it would take four generations for the "iniquity of the Amorites" (Gen. 15:16) to be fulfilled?**

### **Genesis 16:1-3**

It is difficult to imagine a greater contrast than what is presented in our present chapter from the one reviewed in our last article. In Genesis 15 Abram is seen as the man of faith, in chapter 16 as the man of unbelief. In Genesis 15 he "believed in the Lord," in Genesis 16 he "hearkened to the voice of Sarai." There he walks after the Spirit, here he acts in the energy of the flesh. Sad inconsistency! But One could say, "I do always these things that please Him" (John 8:29).

"Now Sarai, Abram's wife, bare him no children; and she had a handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing. I pray thee, go in unto my maid, it may be that I may obtain children by her" (Gen. 16:1, 2). In this suggestion of Sarai's we witness a fresh testing of Abram. Again and again our patriarch was tried—tried, may we not say, at every point. First, his faith had to overcome the ties of nature: God's call was for him to leave his country and his kindred. Then, shortly after he had actually arrived in Canaan, his faith was tried by stress of circumstances—there was a famine in the land. Next, he had to meet a trial respecting a



brother: Abram feared that the friction between his herdsmen and the herdsmen of his nephew might lead to "strife" between brethren, and how he met this by his magnanimous offer to Lot we have already seen in an earlier chapter. Later, there was a testing of Abram's courage, as well as his love for his nephew. Lot had been captured by a powerful warrior, but Abram hastens to his rescue and delivers him. Subsequently, there was a testing of his cupidity. The King of Sodom offered to "reward" him for overcoming Chedorlaomer. And now he is tested by a suggestion from his wife. Would he take matters out of the hand of God and act in the energy of the flesh with reference to the obtaining of a son and heir? Thus, at six different points (to this stage in his history) was the character of Abram tested. We might summarize them thus: There was the trying of the fervor of his faith—did he love God more than home and kindred? There was the trying of the sufficiency of his faith—was he looking to the living God to supply all his need, or was he depending on propitious circumstances? There was the trying of the humility of his faith—would he assert his "rights," or yield to Lot? There was the trying of the boldness of his faith—would he dare attempt the rescue of his nephew from the hands of a powerful warrior? There was the trying of the dignity of his faith—would he demean himself by accepting honors from the King of Sodom? There was the trying of the patience of his faith—would he wait for God to fulfill His word in His own good time and way, or would he take matters into his own hand?

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Even as Christians born again unto a completely new life, we have been given a free will to choose. One choice can bring the true Christian into obedience, peace and victory. The other choice can only bring worry, mental disturbance, defeat and an opportunity for Satan. The first way is known as walking in the Spirit; the latter as walking in the flesh (carnal man, or self). **To know how we make the choices in the flesh or in the Spirit, please study the following Scriptures:**

**Carnality, flesh:** Isa. 14:13-15 Rom. 1:18-32 Rom. 3:9-20 Eph. 2:2, 3

**self:** Rom. 6:16 Rom. 6:18, 19 Rom. 8:5-13 1 Cor. 3:1-4

**Spirit man:** Rom. 6:22 Rom. 8:2 Rom. 8:37 1 Cor. 3:2 2 Cor. 4:7-8 2 Cor. 12:9, 10 Gal. 5:18  
Gal. 5:22 Eph. 2:19, 20 Eph. 4:11, 12, 15, 16 Eph. 5:9 Col. 3:15 2 Tim. 1:7 Heb. 5:12-14

### **Genesis 16:4-16**

"And the angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence comest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai. And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands" (vs. 7-9). Grace reigns through righteousness. It was grace that sought her, it was righteousness that thus counseled her. Grace is never exercised at the expense of righteousness. Grace upholds rather than ignores our responsibilities toward God and toward our neighbor. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation, teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:11,12). Note two things here in connection with Hagar: First, the angel of the Lord addresses her as "Sarai's maid," thus disallowing her marriage (?) with Abram; and second, she is bidden to "return" to her mistress. The day would come when God Himself would open the door, and send Hagar out of Abram's house (21:12-14), but till then she must "submit" herself to the authority of Sarai. For another thirteen years she must patiently endure her lot and perform her duty. In the meantime, the Lord cheers Hagar's heart with a promise (see v. 10). Is there a word here for any of our readers? Is there one who has fled from the post of duty? Then to such the Lord's word is, "Return, submit." If we have done wrong, no matter what the temptation or provocation may have been, the only way to Divine blessing, to peace and happiness, is to retrace our footsteps (as far as this is possible), in repentance and submission.

"And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him" (vs. 11,12). This prophecy seems to have had reference more to his posterity than to Ishmael himself. It is well known how accurately its terms have been fulfilled in the Arabs who, in all ages, have been a wild and warlike people, and who, though surrounded by nations that have each been conquered in turn, yet have themselves been unsubdued by the great powers unto this day.

" And she called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou God seest me; for she said, Have I also here looked after Him that seeth me? Wherefore, the well was called, The well of Him that, liveth and seeth me" (vs. 13, 14). May the Lord Himself find us at the "well" as He did Hagar of old, and may it be ours as it was hers to hear and see Him.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Hagar was considered an insignificant person, having been brought from Egypt by Sarai to be her maid, yet our God was very aware of her and her son even though she did not know the God of Abram, and of her desperation regarding their future. Therefore He sent His angel to minister to them out in the desert. **From this story alone, may we draw**

**inference that not one soul is ever left out of God's loving care? Give Bible verses that would attest to this, and bring comfort to discouraged hearts.**

Ps. 91:14    Prov. 8:17    Phil. 4:19

**Give some examples in Scripture of how good came out of an incident at a well? (Wells in Scripture denote God as the fountain of life (Ps. 36:9) and our Lord Jesus as living water for His own (John 7:37, 38.))**

Gen. 21:30-33    Gen. 29:1-11    John 4

### **Genesis 17:1-14**

It is to be noted that in connection with the revelation of Himself as the "Almighty," the Lord God made Abram a composite promise in which seven times He said "I will—" "And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish My covenant between Me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.... And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed: and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. But My covenant will I establish with Isaac" (vs. 6, 7, 8, 19, 21). The relationship between this compound promise and the title of Deity used on the occasion of its utterance is the pledge of its fulfilment. It is because all power is at His disposal, it is because He is sufficient in Himself, that the performing of all He has said is sure. What God says He will do. So sure is the fulfilment that in verse 5 the Lord says, "for a father of many nations have, I made thee" (not "will I make thee"), just as in Romans 8:30 it is "whom He justified them He also glorified," and yet in experience the glorification is yet future.

With the above seven "I wills" of God should be compared the seven "I wills" of Exodus 6:6-8, "Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: and I will take you to be a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning that which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob; and I will give it you for a heritage; I am the Lord." Our purpose in calling attention to this latter passage is that in Genesis 16 the Lord revealed Himself to Abram as the Almighty (Elohim) and followed the revelation with a sevenfold promise, and here in Exodus 6 He reveals Himself as Jehovah (v. 3) and follows this revelation with another sevenfold promise. Perfect are the ways and perfect is the Word of Him with whom we have to do.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**What promise or covenant does God have with us and what are His "I wills" of this final covenant?**

Jer. 31:31-34    Luke 1:68-79    Rom. 6:8-14, 22, 23    Rom. 7:6    Rom. 8:39    2 Cor. 6:17-18    2 Cor. 7:1    Eph. 3:20, 21    Phil. 3:20, 21    Heb. 2:14,15,18    Heb. 7:25    Heb. 9:11-23    Heb. 13:20    Jude 24

Israel had the sign of circumcision to show that they were in covenant with Jehovah God. **What sign does the Church have, denoting that the believers are in covenant with Christ, their Redeemer?**

Micah 3:8    John 3:3,5    John 14:16-26    John 16:13    Acts 2:4    Acts 2:17-41    Rom. 8:11,16    Rom. 14:17  
Rom. 15:16    1 Cor. 2:10-16    1 Cor. 12:3-11, 13    Gal. 5:22,23    2 Thess. 2:13    Heb. 10:15    1  
John 2:20, 27    1 John 4:1-6

### **Genesis 17:15-22**

Why had Abram to wait all this while before the Lord appeared to him again? Why must so many years drag their weary course before Jehovah reveals Himself once more and makes promise of giving him Isaac? Is not the answer to be found in Romans 4:19? "And being not weak in faith; he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb." God was about to act in grace, but ere grace can be displayed the creature has first to come to the end of himself—ere divine power is put forth; man must learn his own impotency. Not till Israel was driven to desperation and despair at the Red Sea did the word come, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." So here. Not till Abram's body was "dead" would God fulfill His word and give him a son. God's opportunity does not come until man's extremity is reached. This is a lesson we sorely need to take to heart, for it is of great practical importance. It might be tersely expressed thus: the Lord has a reason for all His delays. God not only does that which is right and best but He always acts at the right and best time. Note, it was not until "the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman" (Gal. 4:4). Is not this the explanation of what is a sore problem to many hearts? We mean, God's delay in sending back His Son the second time. Like one of old, we are often tempted to ask, "Why is His chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of His chariots?" (Judges 5:28). Alas! here is the

answer—the "fulness of time" has not yet arrived. God has a wise and good reason for the delay. That is what we learn from 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise (to send back His Son—see v. 4), as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." God's delay in sending back His Son is due to His long-sufferance, not willing that any should perish.

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Explain how the name "El Shaddai" (17:1) fits in with what is going on with Abraham and Sarah's lives.**

### **Genesis 17:23-27**

The rite of circumcision first appears in the Biblical record after the announcement; of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 12:1). The sign of the covenant between the Lord and Noah was the rainbow (Gen.9:13; cp. 8:20-22), in regard to which man himself had no responsibility. But this token of God's covenant with Abraham, circumcision, becomes effective only by the voluntary obedience of man, especially of parent toward child, and thus indicates (1) man's responsibility; (2) his faith in God's Word (Rom.4:11-12); and (3) his assent to the condition of divine mercy.

(The New Scofield Reference Bible footnote Gen.17:10, C. I. Scofield)

**What was the covenant that God made to Abraham that circumcision was the sign of?**

Gen. 12:1-3      Rom. 4:11-12      Gal. 3:13-14

### **Genesis 18:1-19:38**

The contents of Genesis 18 and 19 are so familiar to our readers that no lengthy exposition is needed. The Lord Himself makes known to His "friend" what He is about to do; but no such revelation was given to Lot who was altogether out of communion with Jehovah. The "secret of the Lord" is only with them that "fear Him." The two angels who accompanied the Lord to Abram's tent, go forward to Sodom, the Lord Himself remaining behind, and with Him Abram intercedes on behalf of the righteous who may be in the doomed city.

The two angels found Lot sitting in the gate of Sodom and in response to his request that they partake of his hospitality, said, "Nay, but we will abide in the street all night." Their reluctance to enter Lot's dwelling—in marked contrast with their fellowship with Abram—intimates the condition of Lot's soul. Observe, too, that it was "in the heat of the day" (Gen. 18:1) that they visited Abram; whereas, it was "evening" (19:1) when they appeared to his nephew. The utter meanness and selfishness of Lot's character was quickly exhibited in the contemptible proposal to sacrifice his daughters to the men of Sodom in order to secure his own preservation and peace (19:8). The powerlessness of his testimony appeared in the response made by his "sons-in-law" when he warned them that the Lord was about to destroy the city—"he seemed as one that mocked" (19:14); his words now had no weight because of his previous ways. The words "while he lingered, the men (the angels) laid hold upon his hand" (19:16) show plainly where his heart was. The summary judgment which overtook his wife and the fearful crime of his daughters was a terrible harvest from his sowing to the flesh.

The deliverance of Lot was a remarkable instance of God's care for His own. Lot was living far below his privileges, and manifestly was out of communion with the Lord, yet he was a "righteous man" (2 Pet. 2:7,8) and therefore he was snatched as a brand from the burning. Blessed be His name, "He abideth faithful; He cannot deny Himself" (2 Tim. 2:13). Just as a shelter was provided for Noah, just as Israel was protected from the avenging angel, so with Lot. Said the angel to him, "I cannot do anything till thou be come thither" (Gen. 19:22).

We cannot leave this section without noticing the obvious connection between Lot's deliverance from Sodom and Abram's intercession for him. The particular word employed by Abram in his supplications was deeply significant. Said he, "Wilt Thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" (Gen. 18:23, and compare vs. 24, 25, 26, 28), which is the very word which the Holy Spirit employs in 2 Peter 2:8! May we not also see in Abram here a type (a shadow of what was to come) of our blessed Lord? Lot was delivered from the kings by Abram's sword and from God's judgment upon Sodom by Abram's supplications. And are not these the instruments (if we may so speak) employed by our Savior! He delivers His own from the (defilements of) the world by the Word—the sword—see John 13, and when they sin He acts as their Advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1).

(Gleanings In Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Does God make known His plans to those who walk with Him and serve Him before He brings that thing to pass?**

Ps. 25:3-5, 14      Amos 3:7      John 15:15

**What elements are there in Abraham's intercession concerning Sodom and Gomorrah?**

## In our petitioning (interceding), must our requests be in line with God's character and His covenant with men?

From 2 Pet. 2:6-8 we learn that Lot was saved from this tremendous destruction by God. **Looking at Lot's life in chapters 13 through 19, where did his affection lie?**

### Genesis 20:1-18

"And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar. And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, she is my sister; and Abimelech, King of Gerar, sent and took Sarah" (Gen. 20:1, 2). The contents of Genesis 20 furnish a striking proof of the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures. No fictitious historian would have recorded this dark blot on the life of such an illustrious personage as Abraham. The tendency of the human heart is ever toward hero worship, and the common custom of biographers is to conceal the defects and blemishes in the careers of the characters which they delineate, and this, had it been followed, would naturally forbid the mention of such a sad fall in the life of one of the most venerated names on the scroll of history. Ah! but herein the Bible differs from all other books. The Holy Spirit has painted the portraits of Scripture characters in the colors of nature and truth. He has given a faithful picture of the human heart such as is common to all mankind.

At first sight it seems incredible that Abraham should have acted as recorded in Genesis 20, but further reflection will convince any honest Christian that the picture here drawn is only too true to life: "As in water face answers to face, so the heart of man to man" (Prov. 27:19). The remaining of the old nature in the believer, the occasional manifestations of it in God-dishonoring activities, the awful backslidings which God's children have been subject to in all ages, and the reviewing of our own sad departures from the path of faith and righteousness, are quite enough to *explain* the deplorable and seemingly unaccountable conduct of the father of all who believe. And if the reader knows nothing of such departures and backslidings, let him not boast of *his* faithfulness and superior piety; rather let him ascribe all glory to the matchless grace of Him that is *able* to keep us from falling.

Sad indeed, inexpressibly sad, was Abraham's conduct. It was not the fall of a young and inexperienced disciple, but the lapse of one who had long walked the path of faith that here shows himself ready to sacrifice the honor of his wife, and what is worse, give up the one who was the depository of all the promises. "What then is man, and what hope for him except in God. None, surely. And it is to ground us well in this that we are given to see the sad and terrible failures of these honored servants of God. Not to discourage but to lead us to the Source of all comfort and strength. Only in realized weakness do we find this. Only when unable to do without God for a moment do we find what He is for us moment by moment" (F. W. Grant).

What made the matter so much worse in Abraham's case was that it was not a question of being surprised into a sudden fault. It was the recurrence of an old sin. Long ago he had followed the same wicked course in Egypt, where his duplicity had been discovered and from whence he was banished in disgrace. But the experience profited him not. Some twenty or twenty-five years had passed since then, and in the interval he had built an altar unto the Lord, had vanquished Chedorlaomer, had been blessed by Melchizedek the priest of the Most High God, had repulsed the offer of the King of Sodom to be enriched at his hands, and had received wondrous revelations and promises from God; yet now we see him leaving God out of his reckoning, and ensnared by the fear of man, resorting to the most shameful deception. How then shall we account for this? The explanation is obvious: until the time referred to in Genesis 20, Abraham had not been in circumstances to call into exercise the evil that was in his heart.

"The evil was not *fully brought out*—not confessed, not got rid of—and the proof of this is, that the moment he again finds himself in circumstances which could act upon *his weak point*, it is at once made manifest that the weak point is there. The temptation through which he passed in the matter of the King of Sodom was not by any means calculated to touch this peculiar point; nor was anything that occurred to him from the time that he came up out of Egypt until he went down to Gerar calculated to touch it, for had it been touched it would no doubt have exhibited itself.

"We can never know what is in our hearts until circumstances arise to draw it out. Peter did not imagine he could deny his Lord, but when he got into circumstances which were calculated to act upon his peculiar weakness, he showed that his weakness was there.

"It required the protracted period of forty years in the wilderness to teach the children of Israel 'what was in their hearts' (Deut. 8:2); and it is one of the grand results of the course of discipline through which each child of God passes, to lead him into a more profound knowledge of his own weakness and nothingness. 'We had the *sentence of death in ourselves*, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God which raiseth the dead' (2 Cor. 1:9). The more we are growing in the sense of our infirmities, the more shall we see our need of clinging more closely to Christ—drawing more largely upon His grace, and entering more fully into the cleansing virtue and value of His atoning blood. The Christian, at the opening of his course never knows his own heart; indeed, he could not bear the full knowledge of it; he would be overwhelmed thereby. 'The Lord leads us not by the way of the Philistines lest we should see war,' and so be plunged into despair. But He graciously leads us by a circuitous route, in order that our apprehension of His grace may keep pace with our growing self-knowledge" (C.H.M.).

As we have seen, it was *stress of circumstances* which revealed the state of Abraham's heart, as it is of ours. Though the wording of it might be improved, we thoroughly agree with the sentiment of a preacher who long ago said, "We possess no more religion than what we have in the time of trouble." It is comparatively easy to trust God while everything goes along pleasantly, but the time of disappointment, of loss, of persecution, of bereavement, is the time of testing; and then how often we fail!

(Gleanings in Genesis, Arthur W. Pink)

### Did God withhold Abimelech from a path of definite sin?

#### Was God thinking only of Abimelech when He "stopped him short?"

Gen. 39:9    1 Sam. 25:26, 34    Job 33:15-17

#### From v. 18 of chap. 20, state how serious this sin appeared to God.

In Gen. 12:10-20, we see that Abraham had done this same act regarding Sarah years before in Egypt. **Why should he now repeat this sin in chap. 20—did he not learn from this evil the first time? Is this once more a teaching regarding our power to choose (when a temptation comes), of either partaking of the flesh life, or of the Spirit life?**

Rom. 8:3-14    2 Cor. 5:21    Gal. 5:16-18    Eph. 4:20-24

Abimelech was both terrified and angry following God's revelation to him; Abraham had a very "lame" excuse; and even Sarah was rebuked for her part in this. Yet in their making a human covenant between them (depicting repentance), and the giving of the gifts, and by Abraham's prayer to God, God then brought healing to all and restoration. **Does this not foretell in part of that Greater and Final Covenant that God would provide for all, who by faith would accept His way, and the death of His Son for their freedom from sin?**

### Genesis 21:1-8

The birth of Isaac marked a pivotal point in the outworking of God's eternal purpose. The coming of this son to Abraham and Sarah was the second great step toward the fulfillment of Jehovah's plan. This purpose and plan was to have a people of His own, separate from the surrounding nations; a people to whom should be entrusted the Holy Oracles, a people of whom as concerning the flesh the Savior was to be born; a people who should ultimately become the medium of blessing to all the earth. In the realization of this plan and purpose, the first great step was the *selection* of Abram to be the father of the chosen nation, the *call* which separated him from the idolatrous people among whom he lived, and the *migration* unto the land which Jehovah promised to give him.

Isaac was the child of *miracle*. Sarah's womb was "*dead*" (Rom. 4:19) and ere she could conceive, a supernatural "strength" must be given her (Heb. 11:11). In this, of course, we discover a foreshadowing of the miraculous birth of the Lord Jesus—now, alas, so generally denied. We are tempted to digress here but must refrain. Certain it is that the vital importance of the virgin birth of our Savior cannot be overestimated. Well did Sir Robert Anderson say, "The whole Christian system depends upon the truth of the last verse of Matthew one" ("The Coming Prince"). Returning to the miraculous birth of Isaac, do we not see in it, as also in the somewhat similar cases of Rachel, the mother of Samson, Hannah, and Elizabeth, not only a foreshadowing of the supernatural birth of Christ, but also the gracious way of God in *preparing* Israel to believe in it, facilitating faith in the Divine incarnation. If God quickened a dead womb and caused it to bear, why should it be thought a thing incredible if He made the *virgin* give birth to the Child!

The birth of Christ was markedly foreshadowed by that of Isaac and this in *seven* ways at least. First, Isaac was the *promised* seed and son (Gen. 17:16); so also was Christ (Gen. 3:15; Is. 7:14). Second a *lengthy interval* occurred between God's first promise to Abraham and its realization. When we are told, "And the Lord visited Sarah *as He had said*" (Gen. 21:1), the immediate reference is to 17:16 and 18:14, but the remote reference was to the original promise of 12:7. So also was there a lengthy interval between God's promise to send Christ and the actual fulfillment of it. Third, when Isaac's birth was announced, his mother asked, "Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?" (Gen. 18:13), to which the answer was returned, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" and the striking analogy is seen in the fact that when the angel of the Lord made known unto Mary that she was to be the mother of the Savior, she asked, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" (Luke 1:34), to which query the answer was returned, "With God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37); so that *in each case* God's *omnipotency* was affirmed following the annunciation of the birth of the child. Fourth, Isaac's *name* was specified *before* he was born—"And thou shalt call his name Isaac" (Gen. 17:19); compare with this the words of the angel to Joseph before Christ was born—"And thou shalt call His name Jesus" (Matt. 1:21)! Fifth, Isaac's birth occurred at God's *appointed* time (Gen. 21:2) "at the set time," so also in connection with the Lord Jesus we read "But when the *fullness of time* was come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman" (Gal. 4:4). Sixth, as we have seen above, Isaac's birth required a *miracle* to bring it about; so also was it with the incarnation of Immanuel. Seventh,

the name Isaac (given unto him by Abraham and not Sarah, Gen. 21:3), which means laughter, declared him to be *his father's delight*; so also was the one born at Bethlehem—"this is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Need we remark how strikingly this sevenfold type evidences the Divine inspiration of Scripture, and demonstrates that the book of Genesis—so much attacked by the critics—was written by one "moved by the Holy Spirit."

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Sometimes God answers prayer immediately, or in a reasonable period, but in the case of Sarah and Abraham much time elapses before an answer comes (25 years). **Use Scripture to prove why God chose to do it this way.**

Gen. 18:14 2 Kings 4:16 Jer. 32:17, 27 Luke 10:30-33 Luke 15:24 John 5:24-25 Rom 4:19-21 1 Cor. 2:14  
2 Cor. 4:17-18 Eph. 4:17-18

### **Genesis 21:9-12**

The coming of Isaac into Abraham's household *aroused opposition and produced a conflict*. "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had borne unto Abraham, *mocking*" (Gen. 21:9). In the epistle to the Galatians we are shown the *dispensational* meaning and application of this, and there we read, "But as then he that was born after the flesh (Ishmael) *persecuted* him that was born after the Spirit, *even so it is now*" (Gal. 4:29); but it is with the *individual* application of this type that we are now concerned. Ishmael exemplifies the one born after the flesh; Isaac the one born after the Spirit. When Isaac was born *the true character* of Ishmael was manifested; and so when we are born again and receive the new nature, the old nature, the flesh, then comes out in its true colors.

Just as there were *two* sons in Abraham's household, the one the product of nature, the other the gift of God and the outworking of Divine power, each standing for a totally different principle, so in the believer there are two natures which are distinct and diverse. And just as there was a *conflict* between Ishmael and Isaac, so the flesh in us lusts against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh (Gal. 5:17).

It is of first importance that the Christian, especially the young Christian, should be clear upon the two natures in the believer. The new birth is not the *improving* of the old nature, but the receiving of a new; and the receiving of the new nature does not in any wise improve the old. Not only so, the old and the new natures within the believer are in open antagonism the one to the other. We quote now from the works of one deeply respected and to which we are much indebted: "Some there are who think that regeneration is a certain change which the old nature undergoes; and, moreover, that this change is gradual in its operation until, at length, the whole man becomes transformed. That this idea is unsound, can be proved by various quotations from the New Testament. For example: The carnal mind is enmity against God. How can that which is thus spoken of ever undergo any improvement? The apostle goes on to say, 'It is not subject to the law of God, *neither indeed can be.*' If it *cannot* be subject to the law of God, how can it be improved? How can it undergo any change? Do what you will with flesh, and it is flesh all the while. As Solomon says, 'Though thou should grind a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him' (Prov. 27:22). There is no use seeking to make foolishness wise. You must introduce heavenly wisdom into the heart that has been hitherto only governed by folly" (C.H.M.).

(Gleanings in Genesis, A.W. Pink)

These verses in Gen 21 provide an example on how to deal with our old nature. Sarah sent the son (born after the flesh) away, following God's instruction to Abraham. **How then are we able to achieve victory over our own fleshly natures? Should we not always be reminded that none of this is possible in our own strength, but our Savior Christ has already provided the means for us to use in order to accomplish this in our daily lives?**

Rom. 6:2-11 Rom. 8:2, 37 2 Cor. 4:7-18 Gal. 4:29 Gal. 5:18 Eph. 2:19-20 Eph. 4:11, 12, 15, 16 Phil.  
3:21 2 Tim. 1:7

### **Genesis 21:13-21**

Hagar is a picture of the world today, physically and spiritually, wandering unloved, frightened, weary, thirsty and blind. God has made gracious physical and spiritual provisions for these of today also, and is willing that none should perish but that all might come to the saving knowledge of God.

**Show in the present how the unsaved always have God's witness before them, but they may be easily blinded and dismayed by their present situation, even as Hagar was.**

John 4:10-14, 25-26 John 7:37-39 Rom. 1:18-21 Rev. 22:12-17

**Will anyone have a plausible excuse for not coming to and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ?**

John 14:1-4, 23-24 John 15:6 John 16:8, 9 Acts 13:41 Rom. 1:18-20

## Genesis 21:22-34

Abimelech was impressed with Abraham's growing prosperity. He felt that it could not be explained on merely natural grounds. "God is with thee in all that thou doest." He sought, therefore, to secure the well-being of himself and his kingdom by forming an amicable treaty. Abraham immediately indicated that while willing to meet him, they must first have a clear understanding about a certain injustice which he had suffered. As our Lord taught afterward, he showed Abimelech his fault as between them alone (Matt. 18:15). The matter was easily adjusted by the king's frank disavowal of his servants' action. In lieu of written documents the seven lambs would be a perpetual sign and token of Abraham's claim to the well, henceforth known as Beersheba, "the well of the oath." The tamarisk was the second of these natural title-deeds. Wherever the religious man dwells he should pray, and leave behind him trees and wells.

(Through the Bible Day by Day, F. B. Meyer)

**What does F. B. Meyer mean (in the spiritual sense) when he says that each man should leave behind him "trees and wells" in the place where he dwells?**

## Genesis 22:1-14

This twenty-second chapter of Genesis has ever been a favorite one with the saints of God, and our difficulty now is to single out for mention that in it which will be most precious to our hearts and most profitable for our walk. Ere examining it in detail it should be said that this is, we believe, the only type in the Old Testament which distinctly intimated that God required a *human sacrifice*. Here it was that God first revealed the necessity for a human victim to expiate sin, for as it was man that had sinned, it must be by man, and not by sacrifice of beasts, that Divine justice would be satisfied.

1. "And He said, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of" (Gen. 22:2). This is one of the very few Old Testament types that brings before us not only God the Son but also *God the Father*. Here, as nowhere else, are we shown the *Father's heart*. Here it is that we get such a wonderful foreshadowment of the *Divine* side of Calvary. Oh! how the Spirit of God lingers on the offering and the offerer, as if there must be a thorough similitude in the type (foreshadow) of the antitype (that which was foreshadowed)—"thy son—thine only son—whom thou lovest"! Here it is we learn, in type how that God "spared not His own Son" (Rom. 8:32). Really, this is *central* in Genesis 22. In this chapter Abraham figures much more prominently than Isaac—Isaac is shown simply (and yet how sweetly!) obeying his father's will. It is the affections of the father's heart which are here displayed most conspicuously.

2. "And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him" (Gen. 22:3). Here we see in type *the Father setting apart the Son for sacrifice*. Just as we find the passover-lamb was separated from the flock four days before it was to be killed (Ex. 12:3), so here Isaac is taken by Abraham three days before he is to be offered upon the altar. This brings before us an aspect of truth exceedingly precious, albeit deeply solemn. The seizure and crucifixion of the Lord Jesus was something more than the frenzied act of those who hated Him without a cause. The cross of Christ was according to "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23). Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles and Jews only did "whatsoever" God's hand and counsel "determined before to be done" (Acts 4:28). Christ was the Lamb "without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1 Pet. 1:20). Yes, the Lord Jesus was marked out for sacrifice from all eternity. He was, in the purpose of God, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). And note how this is suggested by our type, "And Abraham rose up *early* in the morning" (Gen. 22:3).

3. "And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you" (Gen. 22:5). Here we see in type that what took place on that mount of sacrifice *was a transaction between the Father and the Son ONLY*. How jealously God guarded these types! Nothing whatever is said of Sarah in this chapter though she figures prominently in the one before and is mentioned in the one succeeding. Abraham and Isaac must be alone. Up to the time the appointed place enters their range of vision "two young men" (Gen. 22:3) accompany Isaac; but as they near the scene of sacrifice they are left behind (Gen. 22:5). Is it without a reason we are told of these *two* men journeying with Abraham and Isaac just so far? We think not. Two is the number of witness, but there is more in it than this. These two men witnessed Isaac carrying the wood on his shoulder up the mountain, but what took place between him and his father at the altar they were not permitted to see. No; no human eye was to behold *that*. Look now at the *Anti-type*. Do you not also see *there* "two men," the two thieves who followed Abraham's greater son so far but who, like all the spectators of that scene, were *not permitted* to behold what transpired between the Father and the Son on the altar itself—the three hours of darkness concealing from every human eye the Divine Transaction.

4. "And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son" (Gen. 22:6). This was no half grown boy (as pictures so often represent Isaac), but a full-grown man who is here brought before us, one who could, had

he so wished, have easily resisted the aged patriarch. But instead of resisting, Isaac quietly follows his father. There is no voice of protest raised to mar the scene, but he acquiesces fully by carrying the wood on his *own* shoulder. How this brings before us the Peerless One, gladly performing the Father's pleasure. There was no alienated will in Him that needed to be brought into subjection: "Lo, *I come to do Thy will, O God,*" was His gladsome cry. "I *delight to do Thy will*" revealed the perfections of His heart. Christ and the Father were of one accord. Note how beautifully this is brought out in the type—"And they went both of them *together,*" twice repeated. We need hardly say that Isaac carrying "the *wood*" foreshadowed Christ bearing His cross.

5. "And he took the fire in his hand and a knife; and they went both of them together" (Gen. 22:6). And he (Abraham) took *the fire* in *his* hand. Here, as everywhere in Scripture, "fire" emblemizes *Divine judgment*. It expresses the energy of Divine Holiness which ever burns against sin. It is the perfection of the Divine nature which cannot tolerate that which is, evil. This was first manifested by the *flaming* sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life (Gen. 3:24). And it will be finally and eternally exhibited in *the Lake which burneth* with fire and brimstone. But here in our type it pointed forward to that awful storm of Divine judgment which burst upon the head of the Sin-Bearer as He hung upon the Cross, for there it was that sin, *our sin*, Christian reader, was being dealt with. Just as Isaac's father took in his hand the fire and the knife, so the beloved Son was "smitten *of God*, and afflicted" (Isa. 53:4).

6. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering: So they went both of them together" (Gen. 22:7, 8). These words of Abraham have a *double* meaning. They tell us that God was the One who should "*provide*" the "lamb," and they also make known the fact that the lamb was *for Himself*. God alone could supply that which would satisfy Himself. Nothing of man could meet the Divine requirements. If sacrifice for sin was ever to be found God Himself must supply it. And mark, the "lamb" was not only provided *by* God but it was also *for* God. Before blessing could flow forth to men the claims of Divine holiness and justice must be met. It is true, blessedly true, that Christ died for sinners, but He first died (and this is what we are in danger of forgetting) *for God, i.e.,* as the Holy Spirit expresses it through the apostle "to declare *His* righteousness . . . that He might be just, *and* the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). Note how this comes out in our passage: it is not "God Himself will provide a lamb," but "God will *provide Himself* a lamb"—put this way, abstractly, so as to take in *both* of these truths.

7. "And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the Angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham, and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not Thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and beheld behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-Jireh: as it is said to this day. In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen" (Gen. 22:9-14). Here the type passes from Isaac to the ram offered up—"offered up *in his stead*"—a beautiful foreshadowment of Christ dying in the stead of sinners who are, as Isaac was, *already in the place of Death*, "bound," unable to help themselves, with the knife of Divine justice suspended over them. Here it was that the *Gospel* was "preached unto Abraham" (Gal. 3:8). Similarly in other scriptures we find this *double* type (both Isaac and the ram) as in the sweet savor and the sin offerings, the two goats on the Day of Atonement, the two birds at the cleansing of the leper.

8. "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called, accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, *from whence also he received him in a figure*" (Heb. 11:17-19). From this scripture we learn that Genesis 22 presents to us in type not only Christ offered upon the altar, but Christ raised again from the dead, *and that on the third day, too*, for it was on "the third day" Abraham received Isaac back again, for during the three days that elapsed from the time Abraham received command from God to offer him up as a burnt offering, his son was as good as dead to him. And now to complete this wonderful picture, observe how Genesis 22 anticipated, in type, *the Ascension of Christ!* It is very striking to note that after we read of Isaac being laid upon the altar (from which Abraham received him back) *nothing further is said of him* in Genesis 22. Mark carefully the wording of verse 19—"So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beer-Sheba." Our type leaves Isaac *up in the mount!*

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

God gave Abraham a series of tests; beginning with his being called to separate from his native gods and kindred (Gen. 12:1) on to the final test, which was the offering up of Isaac as a burnt offering to Jehovah. **Why do you think God designed these series of tests for Abraham, and why did it require this many?**

Ps. 66:10-12    Is. 48:10    Mal. 3:3, 4    Jas. 1:3, 4, 12    1 Pet. 1:6-9    1 Pet. 4:12-16

**Since the earth has been sin-cursed following the Fall in the Garden of Eden, and each person born thereafter has been given the choice of free will (to obey God or not), then is it not conceivable that we, too, are in need of testings and trials in order that our faith will be strengthened and purified? Also, why is it that for some it takes a**



**long time to grasp God's truth and to see His ways as only of lovingkindness and absolute righteousness? Following are Scriptures that attest to God's purposes for His testings; see if you can name them—i.e., faith, obedience, etc.**

Gen. 3:1-8 Gen. 22:1-18 Judges 6:36-40 1 Kings 18:22-24 Job 1:6-22 Dan. 1:12-16

### **Genesis 22:15-24**

The life of Abraham as recorded in Genesis, is not *merely* a piece of inspired *history* (though truly it is such), and is not an obsolete narrative of something which happened in the far distant past, but it is also, and specially, a portrayal of the experiences of Abraham's children in all ages, and a description of God's dealings with His own in all time. To particularize: What was Abraham at the beginning? A lost sinner; one who knew not God; an idolater. So were we: "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles . . . that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:11,12). What happened? The God of glory appeared unto him (Acts 7:2). So it was with us. He revealed Himself to us. What was the next thing? God's call to Abraham to separate himself from everything which pertained to the old life. Such is God's call to us—to separate ourselves from the world and everything in it. Did Abraham obey? At first only imperfectly. Instead of leaving his kindred as commanded, Terah his father, and Lot his nephew accompanied him as he left Chaldea. Has this no voice for us? Does it not solemnly condemn Abraham's "children?" Has not our response to God's call of separation been tardy and partial? To proceed: Soon after Abraham arrived in Canaan painful circumstances try his faith—a "famine" arose. How did this affect him? Did he make known his need to God and look to Him to meet it? Ah, can we not supply the answer from *our own* sad experience? Have we not turned to the world for help and deliverance in the hour of emergency, as Abraham turned to Egypt? See Abraham again in Genesis 16. He is childless. God has promised that his seed should inherit the land. But years have passed and Sarah is still barren. What does Abraham do? Does he patiently wait upon God and go on waiting? Suppose the Bible had not told us, could not our own experience supply the answer once more? Abraham has recourse to *fleshly* means, and drags in Hagar to *assist* God (?) in the furtherance of His purpose. And what was the outcome? Did *God* lose patience? Well He might. But did He cast off His erring child? Has He dealt thus with us? No, indeed, "If we believe not, yet He *abideth* faithful" (2 Tim. 2:12). We need not review Abraham's life any further. Do you not see now, dear reader, *why* Abraham is termed the "father of us all?" Is not the saying of the world—"Like father, like son"—true here? But let us look at one other line in the picture ere we leave it. Look at Abraham in Genesis 22, offering up Isaac. Does this apply to us? Is there anything in the experience of Christians today which corresponds with the scene enacted on Mount Moriah? Surely, but note *when* this occurred—not at the beginning, but near the *close* of Abraham's pilgrimage. Ah! life's discipline had not been in vain: the fire had done its work, the gold had been refined. At the last Abraham had reached the place where he is not only willing to give up Terah and Lot at the call of God, but where he is ready to lay his *Isaac* upon the altar! In other words, he resigns *all* to God, and places at *His* feet the dearest idol of his heart. Grace had triumphed, for grace alone can bring the human heart into entire submission to the Divine will. So will grace triumph with us in the end. See, then, in Abraham's up and down experiences, his trials, his failures, a representation of *yours*. See in God's patient dealings with Abraham a portrayal of His dealings with *you*. See in the final triumph of grace in Abraham the promise of its ultimate triumph in *you*, and thus will Genesis be a *living* book by translating it into the *present*.

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Below is a summation of the life of Abraham believed to be written by F. B. Meyer. **After reading it please give a few words of your own as to the impact of Abraham's life upon you:**

Out of materials which were by no means extraordinary, God built up a character with which He could hold fellowship as friend with friend; and a life which has exerted a profound influence on all after-time. It would seem as if He can raise any crop He chooses, when the soil of the heart and life are entirely surrendered to Him.

Why should not we henceforth yield ourselves utterly to His divine husbandry, asking Him to fulfill in us the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power? Only let us trust Him fully, and obey Him instantly and utterly; and as the years pass by, they shall witness results which shall bring glory to God in the highest, while they fill us with ceaseless praise.

### **Genesis 23:1-20**

Death is an ever-constant reminder that this world is not our home. We rise up from before our dead to confess that we are only strangers and sojourners on the earth. Though the whole country, by God's deed and gift, belonged to Abraham, it had not as yet been made over; hence the necessity for this deliberate purchase with all the stately formalities of the leisured East. Abraham's insistence on buying this grave, and the care with which the negotiations were pursued, show that he realized that his descendants would come again into that land and possess it. It was as though he felt that

he and Sarah should lie there awaiting the return of their children and their children's children. See also Gen. 49:29, 30. In the same way, the graves of martyrs and of missionaries who have fallen at the post of duty are the silent outposts that hold those lands for Christ as the graves of the saints await the Second Advent.

(Through the Bible Day by Day, F. B. Meyer)

All of us come into this world empty-handed, and we leave, not taking anything with us. **Can you tell us why this world is not our home and why we are looking for a continuing city, not made with hands?**

Ecc. 3:1-22      1 Pet. 2:9-12      2 Pet. 3:1-18

### **Genesis 24:1-67**

Think back thirty-seven centuries. The soft light of an Oriental sunset falls gently on the fertile grazing grounds watered by the broad Euphrates, and as its gloom lights up all the landscapes dotted by flocks, and huts, and villages, it irradiates with an especial wealth of color the little town of Haran, founded one hundred years before by Terah, who, traveling northward from Ur, resolved to go no further. The old man was hurting deeply at the recent loss of his youngest son, and after him the infant settlement was named. There Terah died, and from there the caravan had started at the command of God across the terrible desert for the unknown Land of Promise. One branch of the family, however—that of Nahor—lived there still. His son, Bethuel, was the head; and in that family, at the time of which I speak, there was at least a mother, a brother named Laban, and a young daughter, Rebekah.

It is Rebekah who occupies the central place in the pastoral scene before us. All her young life had been spent in that old town. She knew by name all the people who dwelt in that little town, and she had heard of those of her kindred who before her birth had gone beyond the great desert, and of whom hardly a word had traveled back for so many years. She little guessed the greatness of the world, and in her wildest dreams she never thought of doing more than living and dying within the narrow limits of her native place. Elastic in step, modest in manner, pure in heart, amiable and generous, with a very fair face, as the sacred story tells us—how little did she imagine that the wheel of God's providence was soon to catch her out of her quiet home, and whirl her into the mighty outer world that lay beyond the horizon of desert sand.

One special evening a stranger halted at the well outside the little town. He had with him a stately caravan of ten camels, each richly laden, and all bearing traces of long travel. There the little band waited, as if not knowing what to do next. Its leader was probably the good Eliezer, the steward of Abraham's house. Abraham was now advanced in years. Isaac his son was forty years of age, and the old man longed to see him suitably married. Though his faith never doubted that God would fulfill His promise of the seed, yet he was desirous of clasping in his aged arms the second link between him and his posterity. He had therefore bound his trusty servant by a double oath: first, that he would not take a wife for Isaac from the daughters of the Canaanites around them, but from his own kin at Haran; and second, that he would never be an accomplice to Isaac's return to the land he had left.

Having arrived at the city well toward nightfall—"even, the time that women go out to draw water"—the devout leader asked that God would send him "good speed," addressing the Almighty as the Lord God of his master Abraham, and pleading that in prospering his way He would show kindness to his master. The simplicity and trustfulness of his prayer are beautiful, and are surely the reflection of the piety that reigned in that vast encampment gathered around the wells of Beersheba, and which was the result of Abraham's own close walk with God.

(Great Men of the Bible, F. B. Meyer)

Rebekah and her father Bethuel showed genuine willingness to allow her to leave her home and family, cross the desert and marry a man she had never seen. **What was the reason for this kind of sacrifice?**

Ps. 1:3      Jer. 31:3      Acts 10:17

**Could we also consider Rebekah a type or example of the true believer who places his trust fully in Christ?**

### **Genesis 25:1-18**

As we have seen in our previous studies, Isaac, typically, represents *sonship*. In perfect consonance with this we may note how he was appointed *heir* of all things. Said Eliazer to Bethuel, "And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old; *and unto him hath he given all that he hath*" (24:36). Observe how this is repeated for sake of emphasis in 25:5—"And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac." In the type this pointed first to Abraham's greater Son, "Whom He (God) hath appointed Heir of all things" (Heb. 1:2). But it is equally true of all those who are through faith the children of Abraham and the children of God—"And if children, *then heirs*; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17). As with Isaac, so with us: all the wealth of the Father's house is ours! But Isaac not only represented the believer's sonship and heirship, but he also foreshadowed *our heavenly calling*. As is well known to most of our readers, the land of Canaan typifies the Heavens where is our citizenship (Phil. 3:20), and our spiritual warfare (Eph. 6:12). Hence it was

that Isaac alone of the patriarchs is *never seen outside the Land*. This is the more noticeable and striking when we remember how that Abraham, Jacob and Joseph each did leave the Land, for a time at least.

(Gleanings from Genesis, A. W. Pink)

### **Did Abrahams natural offspring in any way disadvantage Isaac's inheritance, both materially and spiritually?**

Early in the bible we see that God made a choice of one over another, and many verses throughout the Bible will bear out that it is God's privilege and right to say who shall be among His elect. **How does the Doctrine of Election or Predestination come into view?**

### **How just and right is it for Isaac to be chosen over Ishmael to be in the bloodline of His Son, the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ?**

Ps. 33:12      John 15:16

### **Did God not fully bless Ishmael's inheritance also? And what do you make of Gen. 25:9, where it is stated that Isaac and Ishmael, together, came to bury their father?**

#### **Genesis 25:19-34**

Let us look at the two sons who were to receive the blessing. They are first brought before us in Gen. 25:20-26—  
“And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan-Aram, the sister to Laban the Syrian. And Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren and the Lord was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger. And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first came out red, all over like a hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob; and Isaac was three-score years old when she bare them.”

“And the boys grew; and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison; but Rebekah loved Jacob. And Jacob sod pottage (cooked stew); and Esau came from the field, and he was faint. And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint; therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die; and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him; and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright” (Gen. 25:27-34). There is far more beneath the surface here (as in all Scripture) than meets the eye at first glance. Esau and Jacob are to be considered as *representative characters*. Esau typifies the unbeliever, Jacob the man of faith. Every line in the brief sketch that is here given of their characters is profoundly significant.

Esau was “a cunning hunter” (v. 27). The “*hunter*” tells of the roving, daring, restless nature that is a stranger to peace. A glance at the concordance will show that the word “hunter” is invariably found in an *evil* connection (cf. 1 Sam. 24:11; Job 10:16; Ps. 140:11; Prov. 6:26; Micah 7:2; Ezek. 13:18). “*Search*” is the antithesis, the *good* word, the term used when God is *seeking* His own. Only two men in Scripture are specifically termed “hunters,” namely, Nimrod and Esau, and they have much in common. The fact that Esau is thus linked together with Nimrod, the rebel, reveals his true character.

“And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage for I am faint.” It is a pity that the translators of our noble King James Version should have obscured the meaning here by inserting in italics the word “pottage.” As is so frequently the case, the words in italics put in to convey a better sense, only *hide* the real sense. So it is here. In v. 29 the word “pottage” is employed by the Holy Spirit to denote the portion which Jacob enjoyed. But here in v. 30 what Esau really says is “Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red,” and this was all he said. He was *ignorant* of even the name of that which was Jacob's. No doubt he was thoroughly versed in the terms of the chase, but of the things of the house, of the portion of God's chosen, he *knew not*—“Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not” (1 John 3:1).

“And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright,” etc. (v. 31). Here Jacob offers to *buy* from Esau what was his by the free bounty of God. A word now concerning this “birthright.” The birthright was a most cherished possession in those days. It consisted of the excellency of dignity and power, usually a double portion (see Gen. 49:3 and Deut. 21:17). In connection with the family of Abraham there was a peculiar blessing attached to the birthright: it was spiritual as well as temporal in its nature. “The birthright was a spiritual heritage. It gave the right of being the priest of the family or clan. It

carried with it the privilege of being the depository and communicator of the Divine secrets. It constituted a link in the line of descent by which the Messiah was to be born into the world.” (F. B. M.)

Esau reveals his true character by saying “Behold, I am going to die; and what profit shall this birthright do to me?” These words show what a low estimate he placed upon “the blessing of Abraham.” *This* birthright he contemptuously termed it. We think, too, that in the light of the surrounding circumstances Esau’s utterance here explains the word of the Holy Spirit in Heb. 12:16—“Lest there be any fornicator, or *profane* person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.” Surely Esau did not mean he would die of hunger unless he ate immediately of the pottage, for that is scarcely conceivable when he had access to all the provisions in Isaac’s house. Rather does it seem to us that what he intended was, that in a little time at most, he would be dead, and then of what account would the promises of God to Abraham and his seed be to him—I cannot live on promises, give me something to eat and drink, for tomorrow I die, seems to be the force of his words.

(Gleanings from Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Rom. 9:10-13 states: “And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac (for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls), It was said to her, “The older shall serve the younger.” As it is written, “Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.” **Was there anything Esau or Jacob had done to gain God’s favor or was it divine choice that chose Jacob over Esau?**

Rom. 9:14-24

**From the following Scriptures relating to Esau and Jacob, what are the two types of people they are foreshadowing in a spiritual sense?**

Gen. 32:28    Hos. 12:3, 4    Heb. 12:16, 17

**What is our birthright today as Christians, and can it be rejected?**

Rom. 8:16, 17    Eph. 1:3-7    Eph. 6:12, 13    Phil. 3:20    Heb. 1:2    Heb. 2:3, 4    Heb. 3:7-11

### **Genesis 26:1-11**

The *first* well by which Isaac is seen is that of Lahai-roi (24:62; 25:11), the meaning of which is, “Him that liveth and seeth me” (See 16:14). It told of the unfailing care of the ever-living and ever-present God. And where is such a “well” to be found today? Where is it we are brought to *realize* the presence of this One? Where but in the Holy Scriptures! The Word of God ministered to us by the power and blessing of the Spirit is that which reveals to *us* the presence of God. The “well,” then, typifies the place to which the son is brought—into the presence of God. His *remaining* there, practically, depends upon his use of and obedience to the Word.

We have just looked at Isaac by the Well of Lahai-roi; did he *remain* there? What do you suppose is the answer, reader? Could you not supply it from your own experience! “And there was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac *went unto Abimelech*, king of the Philistines unto Gerar” (26:1). Isaac’s departure from the well Lahai-roi to Gerar typifies the *failure* of the son (the believer) to maintain his standing in the presence of God and his enjoyment of Divine fellowship. But is it not blessed to read next, “And the Lord appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will *bless* thee, for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father” (26:2,3). Apparently, Isaac was on his way to *Egypt*, like his father before him in time of famine, and would have gone there had not the Lord appeared to him and arrested his steps. In passing, we would remark that here we have a striking illustration of the *sovereign ways* of God. To Isaac the Lord appeared and stayed him from going down to Egypt, yet under precisely similar circumstances He appeared not unto Abraham!

“And Isaac dwelt in Gerar” (26:6). Gerar was the *borderland* midway between Canaan and Egypt. Note that God had said to Isaac, “*Sojourn* in this land” (v. 3), but Isaac “*dwelt*” there (v. 6), and that “a long time” (v. 8). Mark now the *consequence* of Isaac settling down in Gerar—type of the believer *out* of communion. He *sinned* there! “And the men of the place asked him of his wife; and he said, She is my sister; for he feared to say, She is my wife; lest, said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon” (26:7). Isaac thus repeated the sin of Abraham (Gen. 20:1,2). What are we to learn from Isaac thus following the evil example of his father? From others we select two thoughts. First, the readiness with which Isaac followed in the way of Abraham suggests that it is much easier for children to imitate the vices and weaknesses of their parents than it is to emulate their virtues, and that the sins of the parents are frequently perpetuated in their children. What a solemn thought is this! But, second, Abraham and Isaac were men of vastly different temperament, yet each succumbed to the same temptation. When famine arose, each *fled to man* for help. When in the land of Abimelech each was afraid to own his wife as such. Are we not to gather from this that no matter what our natural temperament may be, unless the grace of God supports and sustains us we shall inevitably fall! What a warning!

The following are statements regarding Isaac's life; read each one and then give a short summary of God's purpose for his life:

1. He is the first example of receiving the rite of circumcision.
2. He was willing to become a living sacrifice on Mt. Moriah at the hands of his father.
3. He did not choose his bride; God did, and he willingly accepted her in the spirit of obedience.

### Genesis 26:12-33

"Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year a hundred-fold; and the Lord blessed him. And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great" (26:12,13). Most of the commentators have had difficulty with these verses and have resorted to various ingenuities to explain this prosperity of Isaac while he was out of communion with God. But the difficulty vanishes if we look at the above statement in the light of v. 3, where the Lord had said, "I will bless thee"—a promise given *before* Isaac had practiced this deception upon Abimelech. That this is the true interpretation appears from the word "bless." God had said, "I will bless thee" (v. 3), and v. 12 records the fulfillment of God's promise, for here we read, "And the Lord *blessed* him." The failure of Isaac between the time when God made promise and its fulfillment only affords us a striking illustration of that blessed word, "He is *faithful* that promised" (Heb. 10:23)! Yes, blessed be His name, even "if we believe not, yet He abideth faithful; He cannot deny Himself" (2 Tim. 2:13).

Next we are told, "And Abimelech said unto Isaac, *Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we*" (26:16). Was not this *God* speaking to Isaac, speaking *at a distance* (through Abimelech) and not yet directly!

"And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham; and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them" (26:17,18). In digging again these wells of Abraham which had been stopped up by the Philistines, Isaac appears to typify Christ who, at the beginning of the New Testament dispensation re-opened the Well of Living Water which had virtually been blocked up by the traditions and ceremonialism of the Pharisees.

"And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water. And the herdsmen of Gerar did *strive* with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, The water is ours . . . And they digged another well and strove for that also . . . And he *removed* from, thence and digged another well" (26:19-22). Again we would ask, Was not this "strife" God's way of leading his child back to Himself again! But note also the lovely moral trait seen here in Isaac, namely, his non-resistance of evil. Instead of standing up for his "rights," instead of contending for the wells which he had dug, he quietly "removed" to another place. In this he beautifully points out the path which the Christian should follow: "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully, what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, ye suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God" (1 Pet. 2:19, 20). We need hardly remind the reader that the attitude displayed by Isaac, as above, was that of the Savior who "when He was reviled, reviled not again."

"And he went *up* from thence to *Beersheba*" (26:23). Mark here the topographical reference which symbolized Isaac's moral ascent and return to the place of communion, for "Beersheba" means the Well of the Oath. In full accord with this, behold the blessed sequel—"And the Lord appeared unto him *the same night* and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father; fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for My servant Abraham's sake" (26:24). On the very night of Isaac's return to Beersheba the Lord "appeared unto" him!

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**As God met him and spoke with him, was this not a renewal of the great Covenant that God had made with Abraham, and that now is being passed down to his son Isaac? Is that also why it is called "Shebah" (the Well of the Oath)?**

**And now in Gen. 26, what further blessings did God give to Isaac because of his obedience? (Gen. 26:26-33)**

### Genesis 26:34-35

"And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite; which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah." We cannot do better than quote from

Mr. Grant:—"This is the natural sequel of a profanity which could esteem the birthright at the value of a mess of pottage. These forty years are a significant hint to us of a completed probation. In his two wives, married at once, he refuses at once the example and counsel of his father, and by his union with Canaanitish women disregarded the Divine sentence, and shows unmistakably the innermost recesses of the heart."

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Comment regarding the downward trend in Esau's life and how it affected his standing with God, from birth onward.**

### **Genesis 27:1-46**

Isaac was one hundred and forty years old and was fearful that death might soon overtake him. He therefore prepares to perform the last religious act of a patriarchal priest and bestow blessing upon his sons. But mark how that instead of seeking guidance from God in prayer, his mind is occupied with a feast of venison. Not only so, but he seeks to reverse the expressed will of God and bestow upon Esau what the Lord had reserved for Jacob. But whatsoever a man soweth *that* shall he also reap. Isaac acts in the energy of the flesh, and Rebekah and Jacob deal with him on the same low level. And here the history of Isaac terminates! After charging Jacob not to take a wife from the daughters of Canaan (28:1), he disappears from the scene and nothing further is recorded of him save his death and burial (35:27-29). As another has said, "instead of wearing out, Isaac rusted out," rusted out as a vessel no longer fit for the Master's use.

"Was Isaac, I ask, a vessel marred on the wheel? Was he a vessel laid aside as not fit for the Master's use? Or at least not fit for it any longer? His history seems to tell us this. Abraham had not been such an one. All the distinguishing features of 'the stranger here,' all the proper fruits of that energy that quickened him at the outset, were borne in him and by him to the very end. We have looked at this already in the walk of Abraham. Abraham's leaf did not wither. He brought forth fruit in old age. So was it with Moses, with David, and with Paul. They die with their harness on, at the plough or in the battle. Mistakes and more than mistakes they made by the way, or in their cause, or at their work; but they are never laid aside. Moses is counseling the camp near the banks of the Jordan; David is ordering the conditions of the Kingdom, and putting it (in its beauty and strength) into the hand of Solomon; Paul has his armor on, his loins girded. When, as I may say, the time of their departure was at hand, the Master, as we may read in Luke 12, found them 'so doing,' as servants should be found. But thus was it not with Isaac. Isaac is laid aside. For forty long years we know nothing of him; he had been, as it were, decaying away and wasting. The vessel was rusting till it rusted out.

"And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son; and he said unto him, Behold, here am I. And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death: Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field and take me some venison; And make me savory meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die" (Gen. 27:1-4). Why was it that Isaac desired to partake of venison from Esau *before* blessing him? Does not Gen. 25:28 answer the question—"And Isaac loved Esau *because* he did eat of his venison." In view of this statement it would seem, then, that Isaac desired to enkindle or intensify his affections for Esau, so that he might bless him with all his heart. But surely Isaac's eyes were "dim" spiritually as well as physically. Let us not forget that what we read here at the beginning of Gen. 27 follows immediately after the record of Esau marrying the two heathen wives. Thus it will be seen that Isaac's wrong in being partial to Esau was greatly aggravated by treating so lightly his son's affront to the glory of Jehovah—and all for a meal of venison! Alas, what a terrible thing is the flesh with its "affections and lusts" *even in a believer*, yea, more terrible than in an unbeliever. But worst of all, Isaac's partiality toward Esau was a plain disregard of God's word to Rebekah that Esau should "serve" Jacob (Gen. 25:23). By comparing Heb. 11:20 with Rom. 10:7 it is certain that Isaac had himself "heard" this.

"And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son . . . and Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son . . . Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee. Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savory meat for thy father, such as he loveth: And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death" (vs. 6-10). How like Sarah before her, who, in a similar "evil hour" imagined that she could give effect to the Divine promise by fleshly expediences (Gen. 16:2). As another has suggested, "they both acted on that God-dishonoring proverb that 'The Lord helps those who help themselves,'" whereas the truth is, the Lord helps those who have come to the *end* of themselves. If Rebekah really had confidence in the Divine promise she might well have followed tranquilly the path of duty, assured that in due time God would Himself bring His Word to pass.

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**What deep realization came to Isaac when he said to Esau in Genesis 27:33, "and indeed he (Jacob) shall be blessed!"?**

**Regarding the result of Rebekah's scheming (instead of letting the Lord handle it)—what did she lose?**

The birthright in a family meant headship and a double share of the inheritance (Deut. 21:17). Jacob tricked Isaac into giving him the blessing rather than to his firstborn son Esau. **Was he ignorant of God's plans, or was he just foolhardy and headstrong in his determination to have all the blessings and privileges of the firstborn?**

Gen 25:23      Deut. 21:15-17      Heb. 12:16

### **Genesis 28:1-9**

In our last article we dwelt upon Jacob deceiving his father, now we see how quickly he began to suffer for his wrongdoing! "And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. *Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban, thy mother's brother*" (Gen. 28:1, 2). Jacob is sent away from home, to which he returns not for many years. In our studies upon Isaac we have seen how he foreshadowed those who belong to the *heavenly* calling, whereas, as we have pointed out above, Jacob typified the people of the earthly calling. This comes out in many incidental details. Isaac was forbidden to leave Canaan (type of the Heavenlies)—Genesis 24:5, 6—and his bride was brought to him, but Jacob *is sent forth out of Canaan* to the house of his mother's father in quest of a wife, and thus was signified the evident contrast between Isaac and Jacob, and Jacob's *earthly* place and relationship.

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

### **How did Esau handle his disappointment? Did his resulting anger and disobedience gain him anything?**

Gen. 28:6-9      Obadiah 18

### **Genesis 28:10-22**

Here we behold the marvelous *grace* of God, which delights to single out as its objects the most unlikely and unworthy subjects. Here was Jacob, a fugitive from his father's house, fleeing from his brother's wrath, with probably no thought of God in his mind. As we behold him there on the bare ground with nothing but the stones for his pillow, enshrouded by the darkness of night, asleep—symbol of death—we obtain a striking and true picture of *man in his natural state*. Man is never *so helpless* as when asleep, and it was while he was in *this* condition that God appeared unto him! What had Jacob done to *deserve* this high honor? What was there in him to *merit* this wondrous privilege? Nothing; absolutely nothing. It was God in *grace* which now met him for the first time and here *gave* to him and his seed the land whereon he lay. Such is ever His way. He pleases to choose the foolish and vile things of this world: He selects those who have nothing and gives them everything: He singles out those who deserve naught but judgment, and bestows on them nothing but blessing. But note—and mark it particularly—the recipient of the Divine favors must first take his place *in the dust*, as Jacob here did (on the naked earth) before God will bless him.

And under what similitude did the Lord now reveal Himself to the worm Jacob? Jacob beheld in his dream a *ladder* set up on the earth, whose top reached unto heaven, and from above it the voice of God addressed him. Fortunately we are not left to our own speculations to determine the signification of this: John 1:51 interprets it for us. We say fortunately, for if we could not point to John 1:51 in proof of what we advance, some of our readers might charge us with indulging in a wild flight of the imagination. The "ladder" pointed to *Christ Himself*, the One who spanned the infinite gulf which separated heaven from earth, and who has in His own person provided a Way whereby we may draw near to God. That the "ladder" reached from earth to heaven, told of the *complete* provision which Divine grace has made for sinners. Right down to where the fugitive lay, the ladder came, and right up to God Himself the "ladder" reached!

In His address to Jacob, the Lord now repeated the promises which He had made before to Abraham and Isaac, with the additional assurance that He would be with him, preserving him wherever he went, and ultimately bringing him back to the land. In perfect harmony with the fact that Jacob represented the earthly people we may observe here that God declares Jacob's seed shall be "as the dust of the earth," but *no* reference is made to "the stars of heaven!"

The sequel to this vision may be told in few words. Jacob awoke and was afraid, saying, "How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven" (v. 17). Next, he took the stone on which his head had rested and poured oil upon it. Then he changed the name of the place from Luz to Bethel. It is instructive to note this change of name, Luz—its original name, signifies "separation," while Bethel, its new name means "the house of God." Is it not beautiful to mark the typical force of this? God calls us to *separate from the world*, but in leaving the world *we enter His house!* "Never do we part from ought at His call, but He far more than makes it up to us with His own smile" (W. Lincoln).

Finally, we are told, "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God. And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house, and of all that Thou shalt give me I

*will surely give the tenth unto Thee*" (28:20-22). How true to life this is! It was not only characteristic of Jacob personally, but typical of *us* representatively. *Jacob failed to rise to the level of God's grace* and was filled with fear instead of peace, and expressed human legality by speaking of what *he* will do. Oh, how often *we* follow in his steps! Instead of resting in the goodness of God and appropriating His free grace, like Jacob, we bargain and enter into conditions and stipulations. May the God of Grace enlarge our hearts to receive His grace, and may He empower us to magnify His grace by refusing to defile it with any of our own wretched additions

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Since God disciplines all those whom He chooses, as we find in Hebrews 12:3-17, are you anticipating God personally dealing with Jacob to accomplish change for the final good as we move along in his story?**

**By the way, has He been moving in your life in similar ways?**

### **Genesis 29:1-12**

In our last study we followed Jacob as he left his father's house and commenced his long journey to Padan-aram where lived Laban, his mother's brother. On his first night out from Beersheba he lit upon a certain place and making a pillar of the stones lay down to sleep. Then it was that he dreamed, and in the dream the Lord appeared unto him, probably for the first time in his life, and after promising to give him the land whereon he lay and to make his seed as numerous as the dust of the earth and a blessing to all families, he received the comforting assurance that God would be with him, would keep him in all places whither he went, and ultimately bring him back again to the land given to him and his fathers. In the morning Jacob arose, poured oil on the stone pillar, and named the place Bethel, which means "The House of God."

The effect of this experience on Jacob is briefly but graphically signified in the opening words of Genesis 29, where we read, "*Then Jacob lifted up his feet, and came into the land of the people of the East*" (marginal rendering). The heaviness with which he must have left home had now gone. Assured of the abiding presence and protection of Jehovah, he went on his way light-heartedly. It deserves to be noted that the journey which Jacob had scarcely begun the previous day was an arduous and difficult one. From Beersheba, Isaac's dwelling place, to Padan-Aram, his destination, was a distance of something like five hundred miles, and when we remember that he was on foot and alone, we can the better appreciate the blessed grace of Jehovah which met the lonely fugitive the first night, and gave him the comforting promise that He was with him and would keep him in *all* places whither he went (28:15). Little wonder, then, that now Jacob goes forth so confidently and cheerfully. As a Jewish commentator remarks, "His heart lifted up his feet." And, reader, do not we need to be reminded that *our* Lord has promised, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end?" If our hearts drew from this cheering and inspiring promise the comfort and incentive it is designed to convey, should we not "lift up" *our* feet as we journey through this world? Oh, it is unbelief, failure to rest upon the "exceeding great and precious promises" of our God, and forgetfulness that He is ever by our side, that makes our feet leaden and causes us to drag along so wearily.

The remainder of the long journey seems to have passed without further incident, for the next thing we read of is that Jacob had actually come into that land which he sought. And here we find a striking *proof* that the Lord *was* with him indeed, for he was guided to a well where he met none other than the daughter of the very man with whom he was going to make his home! It was not by chance that Jacob lit upon that well in the field, nor was it by accident that Rachel came to that well just when she did. There are no chance happenings or accidents in a world that is governed by God. It was not by chance that the Ishmaelites passed by when the brethren of Joseph were plotting his death, nor was it an accident they were journeying down to Egypt. It was not by chance that Pharaoh's daughter went down to the river to bathe, and that one of her attendants discovered there the infant Moses in the ark of bulrushes. It was not by chance that upon a certain night, critical in the history of Israel, that Ahasuerus was unable to sleep and that he should arise and read the state records which contained an entry of how Mordecai had foiled an attempt on the King's life, which led, in turn, to the saving of Mordecai's life. So, we say, it was not by chance that Jacob now met Rachel. No; we repeat, there cannot be any chance happenings in a world that is governed by God, still less can there be any accidents in the lives of those He is constantly "with." My reader, there are no chance happenings, no chance meetings, no chance delays, no chance losses, no chance anything in *our* lives. *All* is of Divine appointment.

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**State some of the bible verses that God has given us which lift our feet and our hearts as we journey through this world.** Example: "Fear thou not, for I AM with thee; be not dismayed, for I AM thy God. I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Isaiah 41:10).

### **Genesis 29:13-30**



In Laban's treatment of Jacob we see the deceiver deceived (Job 4:8). This principle that whatsoever a man soweth *that shall he also reap* is written large across the pages of Holy Scripture and is strikingly, nay marvelously, illustrated again and again. Pharaoh, King of Egypt, gave orders that every son of the Hebrews should be *drowned* (Ex. 1:22), and so in the end *he* was drowned (Ex. 14:28). Korah caused a cleft in the Congregation of Israel (Num. 16:2,3), and so God made a cleft in the earth to swallow him (Num. 16:30). Again, we read of one Adoni-bezek that he fled, "and they pursued after him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes. And Adoni-bezek said, Three-score and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table; as I have done, so *God* hath requited me!" (Judges 1:6, 7). Wicked Ahab caused Naboth to be slain and the dogs came and licked up his blood (1 Kings 21:19); accordingly we read that when Ahab died he was buried in Samaria, "And one washed the chariot (in which he had been slain) in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up *his* blood" (1 Kings 22:38). King Asa caused the prophet to be placed in "the house of *the stocks*" (2 Chron. 16:10 RV), and accordingly we read later that God punished *him* by a disease in his *feet* (1 Kings 15:23). Haman prepared a gallows for Mordecai, but was hanged upon it himself (Esther 7:10). Saul of Tarsus stood by and consented to the *stoning* of Stephen, and later we read that at Lystra the Jews *stoned* Paul (Acts 14:19)—this is the more noticeable because Barnabas who was with him escaped!

But the most striking example of what men term "poetic justice" is the case of Jacob himself. First, he deceived his father and was, in turn, deceived by his father-in-law; Jacob came the younger for the elder to deceive Isaac, and has the elder daughter of Laban given instead of the younger for a wife. Second, we may mark the same principle at work in Jacob's wife. In deceiving Jacob in the matter of Leah, Laban tricked Rachel; later we find Rachel tricking Laban (31:35). Again, we note how a mercenary spirit actuated Jacob in buying the birthright from Esau for a mess of pottage; the sequel to this was the mercenary spirit in Laban which caused him to change Jacob's wages ten times (see 31:41). Finally we may remark, what is most striking of all, that Jacob deceived Isaac by allowing his mother to cover his hands and neck with "the skins of *the kids of the goats*" (27:16), and later Jacob's sons deceived him by dipping the coat of Joseph in the blood of "*a kid of the goats*" (37:31) and making him believe an evil beast had devoured him: note, too, that Jacob deceived Isaac in regard to his favorite son (Esau), and so was Jacob deceived in regard to *his* favorite son (Joseph).

While it is true that very often *the connection between* evil doing and its evil consequences is not so apparent as in the above examples, nevertheless, God has given us, and still gives us, sufficient proof so as to provide us with solemn warnings of the fact that He is *not mocked*, that He *does* observe the ways of men, that He *hates* sin wherever it is found, and that His righteous government requires that "*every transgression and disobedience*" shall receive "a just recompense of reward" (Heb. 2:2). This "just recompense of reward" is visited upon His own children here in this world, not sent in anger but in love, not in judgment but directed to the conscience and heart so as to bring them to judge themselves for their evil doing. With the wicked it is often otherwise. Frequently they flourish here as a green bay tree, but at the Great White Throne the books shall be opened and every one of them shall be "*judged according to their works.*"

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Have you found it true in your own life when you are trying to get your own way or gain some advantage over another that the truth comes out of our lips a little exaggerated or not exactly correct. Is this a natural tendency of our flesh whether saved or not saved? What could be the consequences if this flaw is not put into check by our Lord?**

### **Genesis 29:31-30:24**

That which occupies the most prominent place in the passage we are now considering is the account there given of the birth and naming of Jacob's twelve sons by his different wives. Here the record is quite full and explicit. Not only is the name of each child given, but in every instance we are told the meaning of the name and that *which occasioned* the selection of it. This would lead us to conclude there is some important lesson or lessons to be learned here. This chapter traces the stream back to its source and shows us the beginnings of the twelve Patriarchs from which the twelve-tribed Nation sprang. Then, would not this cause us to suspect that the *meaning* of the names of these twelve Patriarchs and that which *occasioned* the selection of each name, here so carefully preserved, must be closely connected with the early history of the Hebrew Nation? Our suspicion becomes a certainty when we note the *order* in which the twelve Patriarchs were born, for the circumstances which gave rise to their several names correspond exactly with *the order* of the history of the Children of Israel.

Others before us have written much upon the twelve Patriarchs, the typical significance of their names, and the order in which they are mentioned. It has been pointed out how that the Gospel and the history of a sinner saved by grace is here found in veiled form. For example: Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, means, *See, a Son!* This is just what God says to us through the Gospel: to the Son of His love we are invited to look—"Behold the lamb of God." Then comes Simeon whose name signifies *Hearing* and this points to the reception of the Gospel by faith, for faith cometh by hearing, and the promise is, "Hear, and your soul shall live." Next in order is Levi, and his name means *Joined*, telling of the blessed *Union* by which the Holy Spirit makes us one with the Son through the hearing of the Word. In Judah, which means *Praise*, we have manifested the Divine life in the believer, expressed in joyous gratitude for the riches of grace which are now his in

Christ. Dan means *Judgment*, and this tells of how the believer uncompromisingly passes sentence upon himself, not only for what he has done but because of what he is, and thus he reckons himself to have died unto sin. Naphtali means *Wrestling* and speaks of that earnestness in prayer which is the very breath of the new life. Next is Gad which means a *Troop or Company*, speaking, perhaps of the believer in fellowship with the Lord's people, and Jacob's eighth son announces the effect of Christian fellowship, for Asher means *Happy*. Issachar means *Hire*, and speaks of service; and Zebulon which signifies *Dwelling* reminds us that we are to "occupy" till Christ comes; while Joseph which means *Adding* tells of the reward which He will bestow on those who have served diligently and occupied faithfully. Benjamin, the last of Jacob's sons, means *Son of my right hand*, again speaking directly of Christ, and so the circle ends where it begins—with our blessed Lord, for He is "The First and the Last."

What a striking proof of the Divine inspiration of Scripture is here furnished! Probably no uninspired writer would have taken the trouble to inform us of the words used by those mothers in the naming of their boys—where can be found in all the volumes of secular history one that records *the reason why* the parent gave a certain name to his or her child? But there was a good and sufficient reason why the words of Jacob's wives *should* be preserved—unknown to themselves their lips were guided by God, and the Holy Spirit has recorded their utterances because they carried with them a hidden, but real, prophetic significance; and in that recording of them, and their perfect agreement with the outstanding events in the history of Israel, in which, though centuries afterward, these prophetic utterances received such striking fulfillment, we have an unmistakable proof of the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures.

What an object lesson is there here for us that nothing in Scripture is trivial or meaningless! It is to be feared that many of us dishonor God's Word by the unworthy thoughts which we entertain about it. We are free to acknowledge that much in the Bible is sublime and Divine, yet there is not a little in it in which we can see no beauty or value. But that is due to the dimness of our vision and not in anywise to any imperfection in the Word. "All Scripture" is given by inspiration of God, the proper nouns as much as the common nouns, the genealogical lists equally as much as the lovely lyrics of the Psalmist. Who would have thought that there was anything of significance in *the meaning* of the names of Jacob's sons? Who would have supposed that it was of first importance that we should note *the order* in which they were born? Who would have imagined there was a wondrous prophecy beneath the words used by the mothers on *the occasion* of them naming their sons? Who? Each and all of us *ought* to have done so. Once we settle it for good and that there is nothing in the Bible which is trivial and meaningless, once we are assured that *everything* in Scripture, each word, has a significance and value, then we shall prayerfully ponder every section, and *expect* to find "hid treasures" (Prov. 2:4) in every list of names, and according unto our faith so it will be unto us.

What a remarkable illustration and demonstration of the absolute Sovereignty of God is found here in Genesis 29 and 30! What a proof that God *does* rule and overrule! What a showing forth of the fact that even in our smallest actions we are controlled by the Most High! All unconsciously to themselves, these wives of Jacob in naming their babies and in stating the reasons for these names, were outlining the Gospel of God's Grace and were prophetically foreshadowing the early history of the Nation which descended from their sons. If then these women, in the naming of their sons and in the utterances which fell from their lips at that time were unknown to themselves, *guided by God*, then, verily, God is *Sovereign* indeed. And so affirms His Word, *for OF HIM*, and through Him, and to Him, *are all things*. (Rom. 11:36)

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**From Gen. 29:31 explain God's ways regarding the giving and taking away of desires and blessings in a person's life.**

Gen. 30:22      Job 4:8      Gal. 6:7, 8

Are you aware, that our Lord Jesus Christ has over 500 different names? To name but a few: Author and Finisher of the Faith, Beginning and the End, Bread of Life, Day Star, Immanuel, Door of the Sheep, Captain of our Salvation. **Can you name a few others, and do they all contain meaning that pertained to His life?**

**Were you also aware that many names in the Bible that end in the letters "el" speak of God? For instance: Daniel, *God is My Judge*; Samuel, *Belonging to God*; Ezekiel, *God Strengthens*; Bethuel, *Habitation of God* — and many others. Can you name some of these others?**

**Lastly, does your own name have special meaning?**

### **Genesis 30:25-43**

Before Jacob had ever set foot in Padan-Aram, Jehovah, the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac, had said to him, "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (Gen. 28:15). And now the time had drawn near when our patriarch was to return to the promised land. He was not to spend the remainder of his days in his uncle's household; God had a different purpose than that for him, and all things were made to work together for the furtherance of

that purpose. But not until God's hour was ripe must Jacob leave Padan-Aram. Some little while before *God's time had come*, Jacob decided to leave: "And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, *send me away*, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country" (30:25). Apparently Laban was reluctant to grant this request, and so offered to raise his wages as an inducement for Jacob to remain with him, "And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favor in thine eyes, tarry; for I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake. And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it" (30:27, 28). Before proceeding with the narrative the above words of Laban deserve to be noticed. This was a remarkable confession of Jacob's uncle—"The Lord hath blessed me *for thy sake*." Laban was not blessed for his own sake, nor on account of any good deeds *he* had done; but he was blessed "for the sake" of another. Was not God here setting forth under a figure the method or principle by which He was going to bless sinners, namely, for the sake of Another who was dear to Him? Do not these words of Laban anticipate the Gospel? And point forward to the present time when we read "God *for Christ's sake* hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32), and again in 1 John 2:12 "your sins are forgiven you *for His name's sake*." Yes, this is the blessed truth foreshadowed in Gen. 30:27: God blessed Laban for Jacob's sake. So again we read in Gen. 39:15 concerning Potiphar, "The Lord blessed the Egyptian's house *for Joseph's sake*." And again, we have another beautiful illustration of this same precious fact and truth in 2 Sam. 9:1: "And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness *for Jonathan's sake*." Reader, have you apprehended this saving truth? *That for which we are accepted and saved by God* is, not any work of righteousness which we have done, nor even for our believing—necessary though that be—but simply and solely *for Christ's sake*.

The sequel would seem to show that Jacob accepted Laban's offer, and decided to prolong his stay. Instead, however, of leaving himself at the mercy of his grasping and deceitful uncle, who had already "changed his wages ten times" (see Gen. 31:7), Jacob determined to outwit the one whom he had now served for upwards of twenty years by suggesting a plan which left him master of the situation, and promised to greatly enrich him (see Gen. 30:31-42). Much has been written concerning this device of Jacob to get the better of Laban and at the same time secure for himself that which he had really earned, and varied have been the opinions expressed. One thing seems clear: unless *God* had prospered it, Jacob's plan would have failed, for something more than sticks from which a part of the bark had been removed was needed to make the cattle bear "ringstreaked, speckled and spotted" young ones (Gen. 30:39).

The outcome of Jacob's device is stated in the last verse of Gen. 30: "And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses." This intimates that some little time must have elapsed since our patriarch suggested (30:25) leaving his uncle. Now that prosperity smiled upon him Jacob was, apparently, well satisfied to remain where he was, for though Laban was no longer as friendly as hitherto, and though Laban's sons were openly jealous of him (31:1, 2), we hear no more about Jacob being anxious to depart. But, as we have said, God's time for him to leave had almost arrived; and so we read, "And the Lord said unto Jacob, *Return* unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee" (31:3).

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Although Jacob worshiped the God of His fathers (Abraham and Isaac), there is little evidence in his life up to this point, that he fully sought God's will only for the direction of his life, yet God is mightily blessing him and his family. The varying twists and turns in Jacob's life certainly give us questions for which there are no "easy" answers. Proverbs 3:5, 6 gives us some insight to understand God's ways: "Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not to thy own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." **What are some of the other factors to be considered about God, His ways and His plans, that would cause these present conditions of blessing and favor toward Jacob to prevail?**

Gen. 3:15 Gen. 12:1-3 Gen. 17:19 Gen. 18:13, 14 Gen. 22:8-14 Gen. 24:60 Gen. 25:23 Isa. 58:11, 12

### Genesis 31:1-13

God times this word to Jacob most graciously. The opening verses of Gen. 31 shows there was not a little envy and evil-mindedness at work in the family against him. Not only were Laban's sons murmuring at Jacob's prosperity, but their father was plainly of the same mind and bore an unkindly demeanor toward his nephew—"And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and behold, it was not toward him as before." The Lord had promised to be with Jacob, and to keep him in all places whither he went, and he now makes good His word. Like a watchful friend at hand, He observes his treatment and bids him depart. As another has well said, "If Jacob had removed from mere personal resentment, or as stimulated only by a sense of injury, he might have sinned against God, though not against Laban. But when it was said to him 'Return unto the land of thy fathers and to thy kindred, and I will be with thee,' his way was plain before him. In all our removals, it becomes us to act as that we may hope for the Divine presence and blessing to attend us; else, though we may flee from one trouble, we shall fall into many, and be less able to endure them." (Andrew Fuller)

How often one is puzzled to know whether God would have us take a certain course or not. How may I be sure of God's will concerning some issue which confronts me? An important question; one that is frequently met with, and one which must find answer in the Word alone. Surely God has not left us without something definite for our guidance. Not

that we must always look for a passage of Scripture whose terms are absolutely identical with our own situation, but rather must we search for some passage which sets forth some clearly defined *principles* which are suited to meet our case. Such indeed we find here in Gen. 31.

Jacob was in a strange land. He had been there for twenty years, yet he knew he was not to spend the remainder of his days there. God had assured him he should return to Canaan. How much longer then was he to tarry at Padan-Aram? When was he to start out for his old home? How could he be sure when *God's time* for him to move had arrived? Pressing questions these. Note how the answer to them is found here in three things: first, a definite *desire* sprang up in Jacob's heart to return home—this is evident from Gen. 30:25. But this in itself was not sufficient to warrant a move, so Jacob must wait a while longer. Second, *circumstances* became such that a move seemed the wise thing; the jealousy of Laban and his sons made his continued stay there intolerable (Gen. 31:1,2). This was ordered of God who makes all things “work together” for the good of His own people. But still something more was needed before Jacob was justified in leaving. So, in the third place there was a clear *word from God*—“The Lord said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers” (Gen. 31:3).

It is not always that God gives us a manifestation of these three principles, but whenever they do combine and are evident we may be sure of His will in any given circumstance. First, a definite conviction in our hearts that God desires us to take a certain course or do a certain thing. Second, the path He would have us take being indicated by outward circumstances, which makes it (humanly) possible or expedient we should do it. Then, third, after definitely waiting on God for it, some special word from the Scriptures which is suited to our case and which by the Spirit bringing it manifestly to our notice (while waiting for guidance) is plainly a message from God to our individual heart. Thus may we be assured of God's will *for us*. The most important thing is to *wait on God*. Tell Him your perplexity, ask Him to prevent you from making any mistake, cry earnestly to Him to make “plain His way before your face” (Ps. 5:8), and then “wait patiently” till He does so. Remember that “whatsoever is not of faith is sin” (Rom. 4:23). If you are sincere and patient, and pray in faith, then, in His own good time and way, He will most certainly answer, either by removing the conviction or desire from your heart, and arranging your circumstances in such a manner that your way is blocked—and then you will know *His time* for you to move has not arrived—or, by deepening your conviction, so ordering your circumstances as that the way is opened up *without your doing anything yourself*, and by speaking definitely through His written Word. “Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass (Ps. 37:5). The *meeek* will He guide in judgment, and the *meeek* will He teach His way” (Ps. 25:9). “He that believeth shall not make haste.” May writer and reader be permitted by Divine grace to enjoy that blessed peace that comes from knowing we are in the will—that “good and perfect and acceptable will” of God.

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**What caused Jacob to know he was to leave Padan-Aram? Had he learned any practice over these many years of taking a major decision before the Lord for his counsel and guidance?**

Gen. 30:25      Gen. 31:1-3

### **Genesis 31:14-55**

In Laban's endeavors to retain Jacob, we have a vivid picture of the eager energy with which the world would retain us when we are about to turn away from it forever. It pursues us, with all its allies, for seven days and more (v. 23). It asks us why we are not content to abide with it (v. 27). It professes its willingness to make our religion palatable by mingling with it its own evils (v. 27). It appeals to our feelings, and asks us not to be too cruel (v. 28). It threatens us (v. 29). It mocks us with our sudden compunction, after so many years of contentment with its company (v. 30). It reproaches us with our inconsistency in making so much of our God, and yet harboring some cunning sin—“Wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?” (v. 30). Ah, friends, how sad it is, when we which profess so much, give occasion to our foes to sneer, because of the secret idols which they know we carry with us! Sometimes it is not we who are to blame, so much as our Rachels—our wives, or children, or friends. But we should never rest until, so far as we know, our camp is clear of the accursed thing.

(Great Men of the Bible, F. B. Meyer)

**In what ways were the images (idols) used—especially those stolen from Laban by his daughter Rachel? Should Jacob rightfully share in her guilt? Was he not aware of God's position against all idols?** Note: An image was a teraphim or a pagan idol.

Gen. 31:30    Ex. 20:3-5    Judg. 17:5, 6, 12    Judg. 18:6; 8-20    1 Sam 19:13    Ezek. 21:21    Zeph. 1:5    Zech. 10:2

**Why did Laban restrain himself when he caught up to Jacob and his family? Was the covenant between Laban and Jacob similar to the Blood Covenant? Also, was Jacob wrong by his fleeing in fear rather than being open with Laban, and trusting God?**

Gen. 31:24      Gen. 31:44-55

## Genesis 32:1-8

In our last article we contemplated Jacob, in obedience to the word of the Lord who bade him “return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred, and I will be with thee” (Gen. 31:3), as then leaving Padan-Aram and starting out for Canaan. We also paid some attention to Laban’s pursuit of our patriarch, and of the affectionate leave-taking which eventually ensued. Here we are to consider another important incident which befell Jacob by the way.

“And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him” (Gen. 32:1). Jacob was now in the path of obedience and therefore God favored him with another revelation to strengthen his faith and inspire him with courage for what lay before him—the meeting with Esau and his four hundred men. While in the path of obedience we must expect to encounter that which will test our faith, and not the least of such trials will be that to all outward appearances God Himself is against us; yet as we *start out* along any path He has appointed, God in His grace usually encourages us with a plain revelation from Himself, a token of His approval, a strengthener to faith; and at *the end* we find the path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. So it proved with Jacob.

“And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau, his brother, unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom. And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now; and I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and men-servants, and women-servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight” (Gen. 32:3-5). As yet Jacob had heard nothing of his brother Esau, save that he was now settled in the land of Seir; but recalling the past, remembering the *angry* threat of the man, he was plainly apprehensive of the consequences of meeting him again. He, therefore, decided to send messengers before him, much as an army which is marching through an enemy’s country sends on spies in advance. These messengers were evidently instructed to sound Esau (for they returned to Jacob with their report), and if needs be to appease his anger. These messengers were carefully instructed what they should say to Esau, how they should conduct themselves in his presence, and the impression they must aim to make upon him—all designed to conciliate. While they were coached to say nothing but what was strictly true, nevertheless, the *craftiness* of Jacob comes out plainly in the words he puts into the mouths of his messengers:

“And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now; and I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and men servants, and women servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight” (Gen. 32:4,5). Jacob does not insist on the fulfillment of the blessing which he had obtained from his father. Isaac had said, “Be lord *over* thy brother, and let thy mother’s sons bow down *to thee*.” But here Jacob refuses to press the claim of his precedence, and instead of requiring that Esau should “bow down” unto him, he refers to Esau as “*his lord*” and takes the place of a servant!” Note, too, nothing is said of the reason why he had fled to Padan-Aram—all reference to his outwitting of Esau is carefully passed over—instead, he naively says, “I have *sojourned* (not found refuge) with Laban, and stayed there until now.” Once again be it remarked, Jacob would have Esau plainly to understand that he had not come to *claim the double portion*, nor even to seek a division of their father’s inheritance—he had no need for this, for God had given him plenty of this world’s goods. How plainly the native shrewdness of our patriarch comes out in all this needs not be argued.

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

With regard to Jacob’s serious and thoughtful planning of what he should say to his brother Esau, the Thesaurus gives the following verbs that might describe what he was trying to accomplish:

**conciliate      win over      pacify      mediate**  
**satisfy      be courteous      impress      appease**

**In your own words, make a statement of how you see Jacob’s actions, using one of the above, or a choice of your own. Would you say he showed some trust in God, or none at all?**

## Genesis 32:9-23

Jacob was “greatly afraid and distressed,” and after dividing his party and possessions into two bands, he at once betook himself to earnest prayer. We considered this prayer at some length, and sought to point out some of its striking and suggestive features. It was a prayer of faith, and one which, in its general principles, we do well to copy.

What followed Jacob’s prayer is now to engage our attention. A striking contrast is immediately presented to our notice, a contrast which seems unthinkable but for the sad fact that it is so often repeated in our own experiences. Jacob at once turns from the exercise of faith to the manifestation of unbelief, from prayer to scheming, from God to his own fleshly devices. “And he lodged there that same night; and took of that which came to his hand a present for Esau his brother.” (32:13)

There was nothing inherently wrong in thus sending a present to his advancing brother; it was the *motive* which actuated him which is censurable, and which is “written *for our admonition*” (1 Corinthians 10:11). In the verses which

follow, the Holy Spirit lays bare for us the heart of Jacob, that we may the better become acquainted with our own deceitful and wicked hearts. Had Jacob's motive been a righteous and praiseworthy one there was no need for him to have been at so much care and trouble in arranging his present for Esau. First he divided his extravagant present into three parts, or droves (for it consisted of cattle), putting a space between each and thus spreading them out to the best advantage, with the obvious intention of making as great an impression as possible upon his brother. Next, he commanded the servants who were entrusted with the care of his present, that when they should meet Esau and he inquired who these flocks and herds belonged to, they should say, "these be thy *servant's Jacob's*; it is a present sent unto my *lord* Esau." Clearly, the message which Jacob sent to Esau was utterly beneath the dignity of a child of God; such fawning phrases as "my lord Esau" and "thy servant Jacob" tell their own sad tale. This obsequious (subservient) servility before a man of the world evidenced the state of his heart. Clearly, Jacob was *afraid* of Esau, and was no longer exercising confidence in God. Finally, Jacob's real design is made still more evident when we note his own soliloquizing—"For he said I will appease him with the present that goes before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me." (32:20)

Instead of trusting in the Lord to work in him a spirit of conciliation, he undertook himself to propitiate Esau—"I will appease him. But mark carefully, dear reader, that after all his scheming and devising he could say only "*peradventure* he will accept of me!" So it is still; after all our fleshly efforts have been put forth there is *no confidence* begotten thereby, nothing but an uncertain "*peradventure*" for our pains. How different from the way of faith, and the calm but certain assurance which is the blessed fruit of resting on the Divine promise and trusting God to undertake for us?

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Jacob's prayer (Gen. 32:9-11) is the first recorded prayer in the Bible. What a shame it had to come from a heart full of fear, and not one moved by great praise! **Do you suppose this "first" prayer is much like one we would pray too?** God certainly was patient and long-suffering with Jacob as He moved him toward a life of faith, trust and power, and away from destructive paths of flesh and self-confidence. **Are testing and trial part of God's necessary tools in order to bring us also into that higher life of joyous faith in Him, wherein we no longer trust in our own abilities of the flesh? Also, does God have a purpose for every life?**

Ps. 66:10-12 Mal. 3:3, 4 Matt. 5:10-12 Luke 21:15-19 Rom. 5:3, 4 Tit. 2:2 Jas. 1:3, 4, 12 1 Pet. 1:6-9

### **Genesis 32:24**

"And Jacob was left alone." In this sentence we have the first key to the incident we are now considering. On these words it has been well said, "To be left alone with God is the only true way of arriving at a just knowledge of ourselves and our ways. We can never get a true estimate of nature and all its actings until we have weighed them in the balances of the sanctuary, and there we may ascertain their real worth. No matter what we may think about ourselves, nor yet what man may think about us, the great question is, What does God think about us? And the answer to this question can only be learned when we are 'left alone.' Away from the world, away from self, away from all the thoughts, reasonings, imaginings, and emotions of mere nature, and 'alone with God,'—thus, and thus alone, can we get a correct judgment about ourselves." (C. H. M.)

"And there wrestled a Man with him." In Hosea 12:4 this "Man" is termed "the angel;" that is, we take it; "the Angel of the Covenant," or, in other words, the Lord Jesus Himself in theophanic manifestation. It was the same One who appeared unto Abraham just before the destruction of Sodom. In Genesis 18:2 we read of "three men," but later in the chapter one of them is spoken of as "the Lord" (5:13). So here in Genesis 32, at the close of the conflict between this "Man" and our patriarch, Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "For I have *seen God* face to face" (32:30).

"And there wrestled a Man *with him*." Note we are not told that Jacob wrestled with the mysterious Visitor, but "there wrestled a Man *with him*," that is, with Jacob. This incident has often been referred to as an illustration and example of a saint's power in prayer, but such a thought is wide of the mark. Jacob was not wrestling with this Man to obtain a blessing, instead, the Man was wrestling with Jacob to gain some object from him. As to what this object is the best of the commentators are agreed—it was to reduce Jacob to a sense of his nothingness, to cause him to see what a poor, helpless and worthless creature he was; it was to teach us through him the all important lesson that in recognized weakness lies our strength. Jacob is now brought to the end of his own resources. One swift stroke from the Divine hand and he was rendered utterly powerless. And *this* is the purpose God has before Him in His dealings with us. One of the principal designs of our gracious heavenly Father in the ordering of our path, in the appointing of our testings and trials, in the discipline of His love, is to bring us to the end of ourselves, to show us our own powerlessness, to teach us to have no confidence in the flesh, that His strength may be perfected in our conscious and realized weakness.

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Carefully read 1 Corinthians 1:26-2:5, and comment on it with regard to its relation to the teaching above.**

## Genesis 32:25-32

“And He said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed” (32:28). “As a *prince*”—as a deposer, orderer (see the various renderings of the Hebrew word: rendered “ruler” thirty-three times); used not to dignify but to reproach. “*Hast thou power*”—hast thou contended (the Hebrew cognate is translated “rebellion,” “revolt,” etc.); Jacob had contended with Esau in the womb and thus got his name “Jacob.” And long had Jacob, “the orderer” of his life *contended* “with God and with men.” “*And hast prevailed*” or succeeded. To quote from the Companion Bible: “He had contended for the birthright and had succeeded (25:29-34). He had contended with Laban and succeeded. He had contended with ‘men’ and succeeded. Now he contended with God (the Wrestler), and fails. Hence his new name was changed to Isra-el, God *commands*, to teach him the greatly needed lesson of dependence upon God.” Jacob had arranged everything for meeting and appeasing his brother Esau. Now, God is going to take him in hand and order all things for him. To learn this lesson, and take this low place before God, Jacob must be humbled. He must be lamed as to his own strength, and made to limp. Jacob’s new name was to be henceforth the constant reminder to him that he had learned, and was never to forget this lesson; that it was not he who was to order and arrange his affairs, but God; and his *new name*, Israel, henceforth to be, him, that “God commandeth.” As Jacob *he* had “prevailed,” but now as Israel *God* would command and prevail.

In the above incident then—together with its setting and sequel—we have a most striking and typical picture of the “flesh” in a believer, its vitality and incurability, God’s marvelous forbearance toward it and dealings with it and victory over it. First, in choosing and arranging the present for Esau we see the *character* and *activities* of the “flesh”—devising and scheming. Second, in Jacob’s experience we are shown the *worthlessness* and *helplessness* of the “flesh.” Third, we learn that *our nothingness* can be discovered only as we get “alone” with God. Fourth, in the Man coming to wrestle with Jacob we see *God subduing* the “flesh” in the believer, and in the prolongation of the wrestle all through the night we have more than a hint of the patience He exercises and the *slowness* of His process—for only *gradually* is the “flesh” subdued. Fifth, in the touching of the hollow of Jacob’s thigh we are enabled to discern the *method* God pursues, namely, the bringing us to a vivid *realization* of our utter helplessness. Sixth, in the clinging of Jacob to the God-Man we discover that it is not until He has written the sentence of death on our members that we shall *cast ourselves* unreservedly on the Lord. Seventh, in the fact that Jacob’s name was now changed to Israel we learn that it is only after we have discovered our nothingness and helplessness that we are *willing and ready* for God to command and order our lives for us. Eighth, in the words, “and He blessed him *there*,” we learn that when God “commands” *blessing* follows. Ninth, behold the lovely sequel—“And as he passed over Penuel *the sun rose upon him*” (32:31,32). The sinew only “shrank,” it was not *removed*. Nor is the “flesh” eradicated from the believer!

Many are the important lessons taught in the Scripture we have been examining, but for lack of space we can but barely name some of them: (1) It is *natural* to the “flesh” to plan and scheme and to desire the ordering of our lives. (2) The mind of the flesh deems itself fully competent to *order* our life. (3) But God in His faithfulness and love determines to correct this habit in His child. (4) Long does He bear with our self-confidence and self-sufficiency, but He must and will bring us to the end of ourselves. (5) To accomplish this He lays *His hand on us*, and makes us conscious of our utter helplessness. (6) This He does by “withering” us in the seat of our creature strength, and by writing the sentence of death on our flesh. (7) As the result we learn to *cling* to Him in our weakness, and seek His “blessing.” (8) What a lesson is this! The “flesh” cannot be subdued, but must be “withered” in the very sinew of its power—“because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, *neither indeed can be.*” (9) That which hinders us in our growth in grace is not so much our spiritual weakness as it is confidence in our natural strength! (10) Not until these truths are apprehended shall we cease to be “contenders,” and shall we gladly take our place as *clay* in the hands of the Potter, happy for Him to “command” and order our lives for us. (11) Then will it be with us, as with Jacob—“And He *blessed* him there.” (12) And so will the sequel, too, prove true of us—“The sun rose upon him,” for “the path of the just shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

(Gleanings from Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Here we see Jacob’s willingness to contend with God at the time of his desperate need. **Does he realize that God is willing to bless him? Is Jacob willing to settle for nothing less than his full inheritance?**

**Why did God ask Jacob to state his name (v. 27)? What is the meaning of “Jacob?”**

**What must Jacob acknowledge before he is transformed?**

**What did God recognize in Jacob in order to change his name so drastically? Was it due only to Jacob’s attitude as a contender or fighter—or was it also that his transformation came about due to an “ego death?”**

Note: You may appreciate knowing that the prophet Hosea saw Jacob as a model to be emulated whenever one is facing difficulty, or a need for character transformation (Hosea 12:2-6).

## Genesis 33:1-11

“And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids. And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost. And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother” (33:1-3). Here again we meet with one of those strange and sudden transitions in this living narrative of our patriarch’s history. Truth is stranger than fiction, it is said, and no doubt this is so, but certainly truth is more accurate than fiction. In the Epistle of James the one who is a hearer of the Word and not a doer is said to be “like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass” (1:24). There is no other book in the whole range and realm of literature which so marvelously uncovers the innermost recesses of the human heart, and so faithfully delineates its workings. In the biographical portions of Scripture the Holy Spirit, as everywhere, paints human nature in the colors of truth. An uninspired writer would have followed Jacob’s wondrous experience at Peniel by a walk which was henceforth flawless. But not so the Holy Spirit. He has recorded just what did happen, and shows us Jacob distrusting God and yielding to the fear of man. Thus it is all through. Abraham in faith-obedience to the call of God went out “not knowing whither he went,” but after his arrival in Canaan, when a famine arose, he seeks refuge in Egypt. Elijah displays unexampled courage on Mt. Carmel, as alone he confronted the four hundred priests of Baal; but the next we hear of him he is fleeing from Jezebel! David dares to meet Goliath, but later he runs away from Saul. And thus we have recorded the sad inconsistencies of the noblest of God’s saints. So it was again here with Jacob: what a change from clinging to the Divine Wrestler to prostrating himself before Esau!

There is a lesson and warning for each of us here which we do well to take to heart. It is one thing to be privileged with a special visitation from or manifestation of God to us, but it is quite another to live in the power of it. Jacob’s experience at this point reminds us of the favored disciples who were with Christ in “the holy mount.” They were deeply impressed with what they saw and heard, and Peter, acting as spokesman, said, “Lord, it is good for us to be here.” But observe the sequel. Next day a father brought his lunatic son to the disciples, but “they could not cure him” (Luke 9:40), and when they asked the Lord the cause of their failure He said, “Because of your *unbelief*.” Is not the juxtaposition of these two scenes—the Transfiguration witnessed by the disciples, and their failure in the presence of need—intended to teach us the lesson that unless faith remains active we shall cease to live in the power of the Vision of Glory? Such is also the lesson we learn from Jacob’s failure following immediately the visitation from God from Peniel. Ah, there was but One who could say, “I do *always* those things that please Him” (John 8:29).

Let us mark for our instruction just *wherein* Jacob failed. He failed to use in faith the blessedness of his new name. The lessons which the all-night wrestle ought to have taught him were the worthlessness and futility of all his own efforts; that instead of putting confidence in the flesh, he needed to cling to God; and in the new name he received—Israel, God commands—he should have learned that God is the Orderer of our lives and can well be trusted to undertake for us at every point. But oh, how slow we are to appropriate and live in the blessedness of the meaning of the new names which God has given *us* “Saint!” “Son!” “Heir!” How little we live our daily lives under the comfort, the inspiration, the strength, the elevation, which such titles ought to bring to us and produce from us. Instead of trusting God to manage Esau for him, Jacob at once resorts to his old devisings and subtleties.

Hardly had Jacob passed over the brook Jabbok and regained his family when, lifting up his eyes, he beheld his brother approaching accompanied by four hundred men. To flee was impossible; so at once he took whatever precautionary measures were possible under the circumstances. He had just sufficient time before Esau came up to arrange his family, placing his different children with their respective mothers, and putting those in the rear that he had the most love for. This shows that though outwardly he appeared to treat Esau with confidence, nevertheless he was secretly afraid of him. He was obliged, however, to put the best face he could upon it, and goes out at the head of his company to meet his brother—“And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.” This betokened the fact that Jacob was ready to take the place of *complete submission* to his elder brother. His action reveals plainly the real state of Jacob’s heart, he was anxious to impress upon Esau that he intended to make no claim of preeminence but rather was willing to be subordinate to him. This will be even more apparent when we attend to the words he used on this occasion.

“And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him” (33:4). It seems to us that most of the commentators have missed the point of this. Instead of discovering here the power, goodness and faithfulness of God, they see only the magnanimity of Esau. Personally we have no doubt that had Esau been left to himself, his reception of his erring brother would have been very different from what it was. But he was *not* left to himself. Jacob had prayed earnestly to God and had pleaded His promise. And now, He in whose hands is the king’s heart and who “turneth it whithersoever He will” (Proverbs 21:1), inclined the fierce and envious heart of Esau to deal kindly with Jacob. Mark it: and he “fell on his neck and kissed him!” Is not the hand of God further to be seen in the fact that Jacob’s wives and children *all* uniformly “bowed” too, to Esau—“Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves. And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves; and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves” (33:6-7).

“And he said, What meanest thou by all this drove which I met? And he said, These are to find grace in the sight of my lord” (33:8). Esau desired to know the meaning of those droves of cattle which had been sent on to him earlier as a



present. Jacob's answer is quite frank, but it shows what it was in which he placed his confidence—he was depending on his present, rather than upon God, to conciliate his brother. Note, too, as in verse 5 he had spoken of himself to his brother as “thy *servant*,” so here, he terms Esau “my *lord*.” Such obsequious (subservient) cringing ill-became a child of God in the presence of a man of the world. The excessive deference shown to the brother he had wronged evidenced a servile fear; the fawning obloquy (the strongly condemnatory utterance) was manifestly designed to imply that he was fully prepared to acknowledge Esau's seniority and superiority.

“And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself” (33:9). Whether we are to admire these words of Esau or not is not easy to determine. They may have been the language of independency, or they may, which is more likely, have expressed the generosity of his heart. Esau was no pauper; in any case, no such present from Jacob was needed to heal the breach between them. Such was the plain implication of Esau's words and in them we are shown the futility and needlessness of Jacob's scheming. Jacob had devoted much thought to the problem how *he* could best propitiate (pacify) the brother whose anger he feared, and had gone to much expense and trouble to this end. But it accomplished nothing! It was all labor lost as the sequel shows. *God* had “appeased” Esau, just as before *He* had quieted Laban! How much better then had Jacob just been “still” and trusted in the Lord to act for him. Let us seek grace to learn this important lesson, that not only are all our fleshly plannings and efforts dishonoring to God, and that they are quite uncalled for and unnecessary, but also that in the end God sets them aside as they accomplish NOTHING.

(Gleanings from Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Micah 6:8 says: “He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you—but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.” **Compare this simple verse about what God requires with Jacob's fawning and elaborate scheming, and give your straight opinion of Jacob's actions. However, before we condemn him unmercifully, when is the last time we “twisted a message” or “played up to someone” in order to smooth out our own path? Isn't it odd how God's words seem to leave our minds entirely at a time like this and our “natural man” immediately takes control?**

### **Genesis 33:12-20**

Jacob continues to press his suit. To have his present accepted would be proof to him that his brother no longer bore him any ill will. Hence, he continues to assure him how highly his favor was regarded, yea, to have seen his face, was, he says, “as though I had seen the face of God.” Finally, he adds, “take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough” (v. 11). In the end, he prevailed upon Esau to accept his present—“And he urged him, and he took it.”

“And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee. And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me; and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die. Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant; and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure until I come unto my lord unto Seir” (33:12-14). If there can be any question raised as to Jacob's secret fears when he met his brother, what we read of in these verses surely settles the point. The old Jacob is here very evident. Now that his brother had accepted his present, he was only too anxious for them to separate again. Esau suggests they resume the journey in each other's company. But this was not what Jacob wanted. Old memories might revive in Esau's mind, and when that time came Jacob wished to be far away. However, he could not afford to offend his brother, so Jacob, at once, begins to frame excuses as to why they should journey separately. Then Esau suggested that some of his own company should stay behind with Jacob—“And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me.” This was probably to afford protection for Jacob and his herds while passing through a wild and dangerous country. But Jacob seems to have suspected some unfriendly design lay behind Esau's offer, and so he declined it—“What needeth it? Let me find grace in the sight of my lord.”

The sequel is indeed a sad and humbling one. Not only was Jacob distrustful of his brother but he lied unto him. Jacob had said “let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant . . . until I come unto my lord unto Seir” (v. 14). But after Esau had taken his departure we read, “And Jacob journeyed to Succoth and built him a house, and made booths for his cattle” (v. 17). Instead of making for Seir, the appointed meeting place, he journeyed in another direction entirely. Even after the unexpected cordiality which Esau had displayed, Jacob would not believe that God had permanently subdued his brother's enmity; therefore he mistrusted Esau, refusing his offer of protection, and sought to avoid another meeting by a deliberate untruth. Alas, what is man! How true it is “that every man at his best state is altogether vanity” (Psalm 39:5).

Jacob's unbelief explains why his journey back to the Land was delayed, for instead of pressing on home he settled down in Succoth. Not only so, but we are told that “Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan-Aram; and pitched his tent before the city. And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for a hundred pieces of money” (33:18-19). And this in the very face of God's word “return unto the land of thy fathers, *and to thy kindred*, and I will be with thee” (31:3). But he had to pay a dear price for his unbelief and disobedience. Divine retribution did not sleep. We have only

to read what happened to his family while Jacob abode at Shechem to discover how, once more, Jacob was called upon to reap that which he had sown—Jacob’s sojourn in Succoth was followed by the ruining of his only daughter!

(Gleanings from Genesis, A. W. Pink)

### **Was God pleased with the altar Jacob erected at Shechem?**

Gen. 28:10-22 Gen. 35:1

### **Should the names of Abraham and Isaac been included in the name of the altar (“The God of Israel” Gen. 33:20)?**

#### **Genesis 34:1-31**

God had not said, Go to Shechem; but, “I am the God of Bethel.” Bethel, rather than Shechem, was his appointed goal. But we are all too ready to fall short of God’s schemes for our elevation and blessedness. So Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem.

But he did worse; he pitched his tent before the city—as Lot did when he pitched his tent before Sodom. What took him there? Whatever may have been his reason, there stands the sad and solemn fact that Jacob pitched his tent *before the city*.

Aren’t many Christians still doing the same thing today? They live on the edge of the world, just on the border. They are far enough away to justify a religious profession, yet near enough to run into it for sweets. They choose their church, their pastimes, their friendships, on the sole principle of doing as others do; and of forming good alliances for their children. What is all this but pitching the tent toward Shechem?

But Jacob did still worse. Not content with pitching his tent before the city, he bought the parcel of ground “where he had pitched his tent.” Abraham bought a parcel of ground in which to bury his dead, and this was no declension from the pilgrim spirit—it rather placed it in clearer relief. But Jacob was abandoning the pilgrim spirit and the pilgrim attitude, and was *buying* that which God had promised to *give* to him and to his seed. The true spirit of faith would have waited quietly, until God had made good His repeated promise.

It may be that Jacob sought to conciliate his conscience by building the altar, and dedicating it to the God of Israel. But where the altar and the world are put in rivalry, there is no doubt as to which will win the day; the Shechem gate will appeal too strongly to our natural tendencies, and we will find ourselves and our children drifting into Shechem—while the grass of neglect grows up around the altar, or it becomes broken down and disused.

“And Dinah, the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land.” It is a startling announcement, but it contains nothing more than might have been expected. Poor girl! Was she lonely, being the only girl? She went along a path that seemed to her girlish fancy ever so much more attractive than the dull routine of home. She took no heed to the warnings that may have been addressed to her. And it all ended—as it has ended in thousands of cases since—in misery, ruin, and unutterable disgrace.

She fascinated the young prince, and fell. It is the old story that is ever new. On the one hand—rank, and wealth, and unbridled appetite; on the other—beauty, weakness, and dallying with temptation. But to whom was her fall due? To Shechem? Yes. To herself? Yes. But also to Jacob. He must forever reproach himself for his daughter’s murdered innocence. And all this came because Jacob stepped down from the Israel level back to his old unlovely self.

(Great Men of the Bible, F. B. Meyer)

Yes, in chapter 34 we sadly see Dinah, Jacob’s only daughter defiled for life, followed by her brothers practicing great deceit with the male residents of Shechem, which was then followed by brothers Simeon and Levi killing all these males and plundering all that they had. Galatians 6:7, 8 will always be God’s law—man shall always reap that which he sows!

**Was Jacob truly repentant, and did he deal as he should have with his evil sons? Or, was he still more concerned with his own self-interests?** For our own admonition, let us take Gal. 6:9 for our personal instruction.

**Following are two true statements concerning chapter 34; please read and give your comments on them:**

**The name of God ends Ch. 33 and begins ch. 35, but it is completely absent from this sordid chapter 34. You will note that the Canaanites wanted to absorb Israel (by intermarriage) in order to benefit from the blessings that Jacob had received from the Lord; and this became a danger that Israel continually faced from other peoples and nations—either absorption or hostility.**

#### **Genesis 35:1-7**

After passing through the grievous experiences narrated in Genesis 34, we might well have supposed that Jacob had been in a hurry to leave Shechem—yet, to what place would he flee? Laban he had no desire to meet again. Esau he wished to avoid. And now from the Shechemites also he was anxious to get away, but to what place should he go?

Poor Jacob! He must have been in a grand quandary. Ah, but man's extremities are God's opportunities, and so it was shown to be here. Once more God appeared to him, and said, "Arise, *go up* to Bethel, and dwell there; and make there an altar unto God, who appeared unto thee when thou fled from the face of Esau thy brother" (Gen. 35:1).

Probably thirty years at least had passed since Jacob had had that vision of the "ladder," and now God *reminds* him of the pledge which our patriarch had failed to redeem. God here addressed Himself to Jacob's conscience, with respect to his neglect in performing his vow. God had performed *His* part, but Jacob had failed. God had preserved him wherever he had journeyed, and *had* brought him back safely to the land of Canaan; but now that Jacob had been in the land at least seven years (for in less time than this Simeon and Levi could not have reached man's estate—34:25), yet he had *not* gone up to Bethel.

That God's word to Jacob recorded in Genesis 35:1 was a *reproof* is further evidenced by the immediate effect which it had upon him. Not only had Jacob failed to go to Bethel, but, what was worse, while Jehovah had been his personal God, his household was defiled by *idols*. Rebekah's stolen "teraphim" had proven a snare to the family. At the time Laban overtook them Jacob seems to have known nothing about these gods; later, however, he was evidently aware of their presence, but not until aroused by the Lord appearing to him did he exert his parental authority and have them *put away*. It is striking to note that though God Himself said nothing, directly, about the "teraphim" yet, the immediate effect of His words was to stir Jacob's conscience about them—"Then Jacob said unto his household and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments" (35:2). These words show that Jacob was aware of the corrupt practices of his family, and had only too long connived at them.

There is good reason to believe that the troubles into which Jacob fell at Shechem were due immediately to his failure in this very particular, and had he gone directly to Bethel his household had been purged the more promptly of the "strange gods" that were in it, and his children had escaped the taint which these of necessity must impart. Furthermore, had he gone sooner to Bethel, his children would have been kept out of the way of temptation (34:1), and then the impure and bloody conduct of which they were guilty had been prevented. Mark, too, how this second verse of Genesis 35 illustrates the awful spread of the leprosy of sin. At first the teraphim were hidden by Rachel, and none of the family except her seem to have known of them; but now Jacob had to command his "household" and "*all that were with him*" to "put away the strange gods" which were among them. The moral is evident: spiritual neglect and trifling with temptation can issue only in evil and disaster. Let us not neglect God's House, nor delay to keep His commandments.

"And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way that I went" (35:3). Jacob not only commands his household to put away their idols, but seeks to impress them with his own sentiments, and urges them all to accompany him to Bethel. His reciting to them how that God had "answered him in the day of his distress" not only argued the propriety of the step he was urging upon them, but would excite a hope that God might disperse the cloud which *now* hung on them on account of the late lamentable transactions in Shechem.

That Jacob *buried* the teraphim and earrings, instead of attempting to convert them to a more honorable use, teaches us that the things of Satan must not be employed in the service of God, and that we need to forsake even the appearance of evil. There can be no doubt that in the readiness with which the family acted in response to Jacob's command we are to see the *hand of the Lord*. In fact the power of God is evident at every point in this incident: the immediate effect of God's word to Jacob to go to Bethel (the effect on his conscience, evidenced by the prompt purging of his household); the unanimous response of his family; and further, what we read of in verse 5 all demonstrate this—"and they journeyed; and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob."

In the Scripture last quoted we find a striking illustration of the sovereign control which God exercises over and upon men, even upon those who are not His people. Evidently the Shechemites were so enraged against Jacob and his family that had not God put forth His power they had promptly avenged the wrong done them. But not a hand can be raised against any of the Lord's people without His direct permission, and even when our enemies are incensed against us, all God does is to put His "terror" upon them and they are impotent. How true it is that "the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; He turneth it whithersoever He will" (Proverbs 21:1). *And God is still the same*: living, ruling, almighty. There is no doubt in the writer's mind that in the authenticated reports of "the Angels at Mons" we see in the terror which caused the German cavalry to turn about and flee from the outnumbered English a modern example of what we read of in Genesis 35:5—"And the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, *and they did not pursue* after the sons of Jacob."

"So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan, that is, Bethel, he and all the people that were with him. And he built there an altar, and called the place El-Bethel; because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother" (35:6, 7). It is significant that Bethel is here first called by its original name, "Luz" which means "departure." From God Jacob had departed for (as previously pointed out) Jacob built no "altar" during all the years he sojourned in Padan-Aram, and only now does he return to God, to the "house of God," to the altar of God, and in order to do this he must retrace his steps and return to the place from which he had "departed." So it was with Abraham before him, for after he left Egypt (where he had gone in unbelief) we read, "And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been *at the beginning*, between Bethel and Ai; unto the place of the altar, which he had made there *at the first*" (Genesis 13:3,4). And so it has to be with us.

(Gleanings from Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Here in this lesson we may learn two very important principles that not only applied in Jacob's day, but they have continued on and are just as applicable to us today: Deliverance of the godly from their enemies (Ps. 31:15-18, 21-22; Ps. 32:6-7; Ps. 33:18-19; Isa. 41:10) and when a godly person has sinned and is away from God, the only way back to God is returning spiritually to the place of that sinning, and in true heart repentance, seek God and His forgiveness, by confession with willingness to follow Him wholeheartedly thereafter by the power of the Holy Spirit (Ps. 32; Ps. 51; Ps. 69:13-18; 29-33). **Read the above verses carefully and determine by God's grace to use these Scripture principles in your times of need. Add other verses as you find them later.**

### **Genesis 35:8-29**

"But Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried beneath Bethel under an oak, and the name of it was called Allon-Bachuth. And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-Aram and blessed him" (Gen. 35:8, 9). In principle these two verses are inseparably connected. No mention is made of Deborah in the sacred narrative from the time Jacob left his father's house until the time when he had now returned to Bethel. The departure and the return of Jacob are thus linked together for us by the mention of Deborah "*Rebekah's* nurse." The same thing is seen again in the verse which follows. "And God appeared unto Jacob *again, when he came out of Padan-Aram.*" God had appeared to him just before he entered Padan-Aram, and He now appeared "again" when he came out of Padan-Aram. All the years spent with Laban were lost, as were also those lived in Succoth and Shechem. The twenty years he served with his father-in-law were so much "wood, hay and stubble." We find another illustration of this same sad principle in Hebrews 11:29-30, where we read, first, "*by faith* Israel passed through the Red Sea," and the next thing we read is, "*by faith* the walls of Jericho fell down." The forty years wandering in the wilderness in unbelief is passed over! Nothing of "faith" was to be found in *that* period of Israel's history. The forty years was so much *lost time!* Ah, my reader, when our records are reviewed at the Judgment-seat of Christ it seems to me that there will be similar tragic *blanks* in most, possibly all, of *our* lives.

The sequel of Jacob's return to Bethel is very beautiful, but we cannot here dwell much upon the details. God appeared unto Jacob again, reaffirmed that he should be called by his new name Israel, revealed Himself as the "Almighty" or "All-Sufficient One," bade him to be "fruitful and multiply," assuring him that "a nation and a company of nations should be of him, and kings should come out of his loins;" and, finally, ratifying the gift of the land unto his fathers, unto himself, and unto his sons (Gen. 35:11, 12). That Jacob was now fully restored to communion with God is seen from the fact that he now once more "set up a pillar" in the place where he had talked with God and poured oil thereon (Gen. 35:14, and cf. Genesis 28:18).

Next, we are told "And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath." How significant and how beautiful is the moral order here: Ephrath is Bethlehem (verse 19), and Bethlehem signifies "House of Bread." Note carefully the words, "There is *but a little way* (*i.e.* from Bethel) to come to Ephrath." Yes, it is but a short distance from the place where the soul is *restored* to communion with God to the place where nourishment and satisfaction of heart are to be found!

"And Rachael died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem" (Gen. 35:19). Thus the leading link of Jacob's life at Padan-Aram was now severed! The "teraphim" had been "hid under the oak" (verse 4), Deborah (the link with his old unregenerate life) had also been "buried under an oak" (verse 8), and now Rachael *is* "buried." Death is written large across this scene. And we too must have "the sentence of death" written on our members if we would walk in full communion with God and dwell in the house of bread. And is it not lovely to mark that from the dying Rachael there came forth *Benjamin* "the Son of the right hand!"

Having considered some of the moral lessons which the 35th chapter of Genesis inculcates, we would in closing point out how that once again we have here another of those marvelous typical pictures in which this first book of Scripture abounds; this time a dispensational foreshadowment of the coming restoration of Israel.

1. Just as Jacob left the house of God (Bethel—Genesis 28) for the land of exile, so has the nation which had descended from him.
2. Just as God said to Jacob "Arise, go up to Bethel," return to the place of Divine communion and privilege, so will He yet call to Israel.
3. Just as the immediate effect upon Jacob of God's "call" was to purge his house from idolatry and to issue in a change of his ways (emblemized by "changing of garments"—35:2), so the Nation will yet be purged from their final idolatry (in connection with Antichrist) and be changed in their ways and walk.
4. Just as Jacob acknowledged that God had "answered him in the day of his distress" (35:3), so will Israel when He responds to their cry in the great Tribulation.
5. Just as the "terror of God" fell upon the Shechemites (35:5), so will His terror fall once more upon the Gentiles when He resumes His dealings with His covenant people.
6. Just as when Jacob returned to Bethel he built another "altar," so will Israel once more worship God acceptably when they are restored to His favor.

7. Just as now the link with Jacob's past was severed, so will Israel die to their past life.
  8. Just as God now appeared unto Jacob "again," so will He, in the coming day, manifest Himself to Israel as of old.
  9. Just as God then said "Thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name" (35:10), so his descendants shall no more be called Jews, but as Israel shall they be known.
  10. Just as God now for the first time discovered unto Jacob his name "Almighty," so on Israel's restoration will the Messiah be revealed as "the wonderful Counselor, the mighty God."
  11. Just as national prosperity was here assured unto Jacob—"be fruitful and multiply, a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee" 35:11—so shall the prosperity and blessings promised through the prophets become theirs.
  12. Just as God here said unto Jacob "the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee will I give it and to thy seed after thee" (35:12), so will He say to the restored nation.
  13. Just as Jacob poured oil on the pillar he erected at Bethel, so will God pour the Holy Spirit upon Israel and upon all flesh.
  14. Just as Jacob found Bethel to be but a little way from Bethlehem, so shall Israel at last find the Bread of Life once they have had their second Bethel.
  15. Just as Benjamin now took his place in Jacob's household, so will the true Benjamin—"Son of his mother's sorrow, but also of his father's right hand"—take His rightful place among redeemed Israel.
- There are other points in this typical picture which we leave for the reader to search out for himself. Surely as the Christian ponders the wondrous and blessed future which yet awaits the Israel of God he cannot do less than heed that earnest word—"Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give Him no rest, till He establish, until He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth" (Isaiah 62:6, 7)

(Gleanings from Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Comment or compare what you see today happening in Israel from what was said by A. W. Pink in 1922 about the dispensational foreshadowment of the coming restoration of Israel.**

**Besides lust could there be other reasons why Reuben laid with Bilhah (Gen. 35:22)?** Helpful thought: After Rachel died Jacob may have given Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid, preference over Reuben's mother Leah (Gen. 30:1-8) which would assure Benjamin's leadership over the next generation (2 Sam. 16:15-23, 1 Kings 2:22).

**What was the consequences of Reuben's sin of lying with Bilhah (Gen. 35:22)?**

Gen. 49:3-4      Deut. 22:30

### **Genesis 36:1-15**

Genesis 36 is completely about the family of Esau, and the many sons of Esau who became chiefs of Edom and others who are called sons of Seir (all Esau's descendants). We know Esau had two Hittite wives, both of whom grieved his parents Rebekah and Jacob. Then he also married a daughter of Ishmael, and from these three wives he had five sons: Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jalam and Korah. Besides the Genesis 36 genealogy, another is given in 1 Chronicles 1:35-54.

God also gave land to Esau—the country of Seir (Deut. 2:5,12, 22; Josh. 24:4) which is known as the high country of Edom. Jacob and Esau are united one final time when Isaac dies (Genesis 35:29). Esau's relationship to Jacob is remembered and respected at points in the Scriptures (e.g., Deut. 2:4-5, 8, 29).

The Scriptures strongly depict Esau as a strong rival of Israel, and is judged by God (cf. Jer. 49:7-22; Obadiah). Malachi 2-3 relates that God loved Jacob but hated Esau, and later the Apostle Paul speaks of this in Rom. 9:13.

**Why is it that God has given us so much history and information about these two brothers? Since "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16), what is it that God wants us to see and understand regarding these two brothers?**

### **Genesis 36:16-43**

An interlude paves the way for the final section of Genesis. It also serves as a further reminder of the brotherhood of Esau and Jacob and their respective nations. Some of these names figure elsewhere in Scripture, among which are several that appear in the Book of Job. The descendants of Amalek became bitter enemies of Israel for generations, until they were finally destroyed by Saul and David.

(Spirit Filled Bible footnote on Gen. 36:1-43)

Edom, the land of Esau's descendents lies south of the ancient kingdom of Judah and is bounded on the north by Moab. **How does Edom together with Moab have prominence in the prophetic Word as the scene of the final destruction of Gentile world-power in the Day of the Lord?**

Ps. 137:7-8    Isa. 34:1-8    Isa. 63:1-6    Jer. 49:17-22    Ezek. 25:12-14    Obad. 1-21    Luke 21:24    Rev. 16:13-16    Rev. 19:17-21

### **Genesis 37:1-11**

In the first of our articles upon Jacob we called attention to the fact that each of the great Israelitish patriarchs illustrated some basic spiritual truth and that the chronological order of their lives agrees with the doctrinal order of truth. In Abraham we have illustrated the doctrine of *election*, for he was singled out by God from all the heathen and chosen to be the head of the Jewish nation. In Isaac we have foreshadowed the doctrine of *Divine sonship*: Abram's firstborn, Ishmael, represents the man born after the flesh, the old nature; but Isaac, born by the miraculous power of God, tells of the new man, the spiritual nature. In Jacob we see exemplified *the conflict* between the two natures in the believer, and also God's gracious *discipline* which issued, slowly but surely, in the triumph of the spirit over the flesh. Joseph, typically, speaks to us of *heirship* preceded by "suffering," and points forward to the time when the sons and heirs shall *reign* together with Christ. There is thus a beautiful moral order in the several leading truths illustrated and personified by these men. And it should be observed that here, as in everything which pertains to God's Word, its *orderliness* evidences its Divine Authorship; everything is in its proper place.

Joseph, then, speaks of *heirship* and, as another has beautifully expressed it, "And consistently with this, in Joseph, we get *suffering* before glories. For while discipline attaches to us as children, sufferings go before us as heirs; and this gives us the distinction between Jacob and Joseph. It is discipline we see in Jacob, discipline leading him as a child, under the hand of the Father of his spirit, to a participation of God's holiness. It is sufferings, martyr-sufferings, sufferings for righteousness, we see in Joseph, marking his path to glories. And this is the crowning thing! and thus it comes as the closing thing, in this wondrous book of Genesis—after this manner perfect in its structure, as it is truthful in its records. One moral after another is studied, one secret after another is revealed, in the artless family scenes which constitute its materials, and in them we learn our calling, the sources and the issues of our history, from our election to our inheritance" (Mr. J. G. Bellett).

Joseph is the last of the saints which occupies a prominent position in Genesis. In all there are *seven* — Adam, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph. More space is devoted to the last of these seven than to any of the others. There are several reasons for this which appear on the surface. In the first place, the history of Joseph is the chief link which connects Exodus with Genesis; the earlier chapters of Exodus being unintelligible without the last ten chapters of Genesis. It is Joseph's life which explains the remarkable development of the Hebrews from a mere handful of wandering shepherds to a numerous and settled colony in Egypt. But no doubt the chief reason why the life of Joseph is described with such fullness of detail is because almost everything in it typified something in connection with *Christ*.

There are two lines which are, perhaps, made more prominent than others in this first typical picture: the love of Jacob for his son, and the hatred of the brethren. Three times over within the compass of these few verses reference is made to the "hatred" of Joseph's brethren. In verse 4 we read, "they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him." Again, in verse 5 we are told, "and they hated him yet the more." And again in verse 8: "And they hated him yet the more for his dreams and for his words." It will be seen from these references there was a twofold occasion for their wicked enmity. First, they hated Joseph's person, because of Jacob's special love for him; second, they hated him because of "his words." They hated him because of what he was, and also because of what he said. Thus it was, too, with the One whom Joseph typified.

As we turn to the four Gospels it will be found that those who were our Lord's brethren according to the flesh hated Him in this same twofold way. They hated Him because He was the beloved Son of the Father, and they also hated Him because of His teaching. As illustrations of the former we may note the following passages: "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God" (John 5:18). "The Jews then murmured at Him, because He said, I am the Bread which came down from heaven" (John 6:41). "I and My Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him" (John 10:30,31). Such was their wicked hostility against His person. And it was just the same, too, in regard to His teaching: "And all they in the synagogue when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built that they might cast Him down headlong" (Luke 4:28,29). "The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil" (John 7:7). "But now ye seek to kill Me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God" (John 8:40)

These dreams of Joseph intimated that this favored son of Jacob was the subject of high destinies; they were Divine announcements of his future exaltation. There can be little doubt that Jacob and his sons perceived that these dreams were prophetic, otherwise the brethren would have regarded them as "idle tales," instead of being angered by them. Note, too, that "his father observed the saying" (verse 11).

So, too, of the Antitype. A remarkable future was promised to the One who first appeared in lowliness and shame. Concerning the Child that was to be born unto Israel, the Son given, it was pre-announced: "The government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end" (Isa. 9:6,7). To His mother the angel declared, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the House of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:31-33). That Joseph's Antitype was to enjoy a remarkable future was thus intimated beforehand.

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Following are more verses giving proof of the Father's love for His Son Jesus, and the hatred given Him by the Jews. Joseph's life indeed portrayed this also. **Meditate on the truths of the following verses:**

Luke 4:28-32 John 5:18 John 6:41 John 7:7 John 10:14-18

### **Genesis 37:12-17**

"And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? Come, I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here am I" (37:12, 13).

The verses just quoted above introduce to us the second of these marvelous typical scenes in which Joseph shadows forth the Lord Jesus. Here the brethren of Joseph are seen away from their father. Jacob says to his beloved son, "Come, and I will send thee unto them." How this reveals the heart of Jacob to us. He was not indifferent to their welfare. Absent from the father's house as they were, Jacob is concerned for the welfare of these brethren of Joseph. He, therefore, proposes to send his well beloved son on an errand of mercy, seeking their good. And is it not beautiful to mark the promptness of Joseph's response! There was no hesitancy, no unwillingness, no proffering of excuses, but a blessed readiness to do his father's will: "Here am I."

One cannot read of what passed here between Jacob and Joseph without seeing that behind the historical narrative we are carried back to a point before time began, into the eternal counsels of the Godhead, and that we are permitted to learn something of what passed between the Father and the Son in the remote past. As the Lord God with Divine omniscience foresaw the fall of man, and the alienation of the race from Himself, out of the marvelous grace of His heart, He proposed that His beloved Son should go forth on a mission of mercy, seeking those who were away from the Father's House. Hence we read so often of the Son being sent by the Father, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). And blessed it is to know that the Beloved of the Father came forth on His errand of love, freely, willingly, gladly. Like Joseph, He, too, promptly responded, "Here am I." As it is written of Him in Hebrews 10:7, "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God."

"And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks, and bring me word again" (37:14). Joseph could not have been ignorant of his brethren's "envy;" he must have known how they "hated" him; and in view of this, one would not have been surprised to find him unwilling to depart on such a thankless errand. But with gracious magnanimity and filial fear he stood ready to depart on the proposed mission.

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Our Lord Jesus came to this earth to do His Father's bidding, and to save all who were lost. **From the following Scriptures show how Joseph strongly typified Christ:**

Matt. 1:21 Matt. 15:24 Luke 9:56 John 3:17 1 John 4:14

### **Genesis 37:18-36**

"And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him" (37:18). The hatred of the brethren found opportunity in the love that sought them. It is striking to notice how that a conspiracy was formed against Joseph "before he drew near unto them." How this reminds us of what happened during the days of our Savior's infancy. No sooner was He born into this world than the enmity of the carnal mind against God displayed itself! A horrible "conspiracy" was hatched by Herod in the attempt to slay the newly born Savior. This was in the days when He was "afar off." Thirty years before He presented Himself publicly to the Jews. The same thing is found again and again during the days of His public ministry. "Then the Pharisees went out and held a council against Him, how they might destroy Him" (Matt. 12:14), may be cited as a sample.

"And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colors that was on him" (37:23). How this brings out the wicked hatred of these men for the one who had come seeking only their welfare. Like beasts of prey they immediately spring upon him. It was not enough to injure him; they

must insult him too. They put him to an open shame by stripping him of his coat of many colors. And how solemnly this agrees with the Antitype. In a similar manner the Lord of Glory was dealt with. He, too, was insulted, and put to shame: "Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto Him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped Him" (Matt. 27:27,28). The same horrible ignominy is witnessed again at the Cross: "Then the soldiers when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments" (John 19:23).

"And they took him, and cast him into a pit; and the pit was empty, there was no water in it" (37:24). We quote now from Dr. Haldeman: "The pit wherein is no water, is another name for Hades, the underworld, the abode of the disembodied dead; of all the dead before the resurrection of Christ. 'The pit wherein is no water' (Zech. 9:11). 'For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth' (Matt. 12:40). It was here our Lord, as to His soul, abode between death and resurrection."

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**Briefly describe the similarities between Gen. 37:27, pertaining to Joseph, and what the Pharisees, Sadducees and priests did to the Lord Jesus. Examples are found in the final chapters of Matthew, Mark and Luke.**

### Genesis 38:1-30

Genesis 37 closes with an account of Jacob's sons selling their brother Joseph unto the Midianites, and they, in turn selling him into Egypt. This speaks, in type, of Christ being rejected by Israel, and delivered unto the Gentiles. From the time that the Jewish leaders delivered their Messiah into the hands of Pilate they have, as a nation, had no further dealings with Him; and God, too, has turned from them to the Gentiles. Hence it is that there is an important turn in our type at this stage. Joseph is now seen in the hands of the Gentiles. But before we are told what happened to Joseph in Egypt, the Holy Spirit traces for us, in typical outline, the history of the Jews, while the antitypical Joseph is absent from the land. This is found in Gen. 38.

It is remarkable that Gen. 38 records the history of Judah, for long before the Messiah was rejected by the Jews, Israel (the ten tribes) had ceased to have a separate history. Here, then, Judah foreshadows the history of the Jews since their rejection of Christ. "And Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite, whose name was Shuah; and he took her, and went in to her" (Gen. 38:2). How striking this is! "Canaanite" signifies "the merchantman," and "Shuah" means "riches." How plainly the meaning of these names give us the leading characteristics of the Jews during the centuries from the Cross! No longer are they the settled husbandmen and quiet shepherds as of old; but, instead, traveling merchants. And "riches" has been their great pursuit. Three sons were born to Judah by Shuah, and the "Numerical Bible" suggests as the meaning of their names: "Er"—enmity; "Onan"—iniquity; "Shelah"—sprout. Deeply significant, too, are these names. "Enmity" against Christ is what has marked the Jews all through the centuries of this Christian era. "Iniquity" surely fits this avaricious people, the average merchant of whom is noted for dishonesty, lying and cheating. While "sprout" well describes the feeble life of this nation, so marvelously preserved by God through innumerable trials and persecutions. The chapter terminates with the sordid story of Tamar, the closing portions of which obviously foreshadowing the end-time conditions of the Jews. In the time of her travail "twins were in her womb" (38:27). So in the tribulation period there shall be two companies in Israel. The first, appropriately named "Pharez," which means "breach," speaking of the majority of the nation who will break completely with God and receive and worship the Antichrist. The second, "Zerah," that had the "scarlet thread" upon his hand (38:30), pointing to the holy remnant who will be saved, as was Rahab of old by the "scarlet cord."

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Looking forward in history, we recognize that God had chosen the tribe of Judah through whom His Son, (the Messiah) would come. The northern ten tribes, known as Israel or Ephraim, became consistently evil—not one of their kings lived in righteousness—and God eventually allowed them to be scattered all over the world. Judah and Benjamin united, and were known as "Judah," and a number of their kings were reformers and walked in righteous ways. However, apart from these brief times of reform and turning back to God, much sin prevailed, and it gives us the picture of how life was when Christ was born in Bethlehem. **Name some of the ways in which the people departed from God's ways. Even though some of the people longed for God to rule, did they at all recognize that each person's sin was the great barrier for this to come about?**

### Genesis 39:1-19

Genesis 39 is more than a continuation of what has been before us in Gen. 37, being separated, as it is, from that chapter by what is recorded in 38. Genesis in 39 is really a new beginning in the type, taking us back to the Incarnation, and tracing the experiences of the Lord Jesus from another angle.



"And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him out of the hands of the Ishmaelites, which had brought him down thither" (39:1). What a contrast from being the beloved son in his father's house to the degradation of slavery in Egypt! But this was as nothing compared with the voluntary self-humiliation of the Lord Jesus. He who was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant (Phil. 2:6, 7).

"And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man, and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand." How these words remind us of two prophetic Scriptures which speak of the perfect Servant of Jehovah. The first is the opening Psalm, which brings before us the "Blessed Man," the Man who walked not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seat of the scornful; the Man whose delight was in the Law of the Lord, and in whose Law He did meditate day and night; the Man of whom God said, "And He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth His fruit in His season; His leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever He does shall prosper" (Ps. 1:3). Manifestly, this spoke, specifically, of the Lord Jesus, in whom, alone, the terms of the opening verses of this Psalm were fully realized. The second Scripture is found in that matchless fifty-third of Isaiah (every sentence of which referred to the Son of God Incarnate, and to Him, expressly, as Jehovah's "Servant," (see 52:13), we read, "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand." How marvelously accurate the type! Of Joseph it is recorded, "The Lord made all that He did to prosper in His hand" (Gen. 39:3). Of Christ it is said, "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand" (Isa. 53:10).

"And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house and in the field" (34:5). So, too, the Father entrusted to the Son all the interests of the Godhead—the manifestation of the Divine character, the glorifying of God's name, and the vindication of His throne. And what has been the outcome of the Beloved of the Father taking the Servant place, and assuming and discharging these onerous responsibilities? Has not the Lord "blessed" the antitypical "Egyptian's house," for the sake of that One whom Joseph foreshadowed? Clearly, the "Egyptian's house" symbolized the world, and how bountifully has the world been blessed for Christ's sake!

Beautiful is it to mark how Joseph resisted the repeated temptation—"How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" This is the more striking if we link up this utterance of Joseph's with Ps. 105:19, "The Word of the Lord tried him." So it was by the same Word that the Savior repulsed the Enemy.

"And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home. And she spake unto him, according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me. And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out" (39:16-18). There was no ground whatever for a true charge to be brought against Joseph, so an unjust one was preferred. So it was, too, with Him who was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." His enemies "the chief priests, and elders and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus to put Him to death. But found none." Yet, at the last, "came two false witnesses" (Matt. 26:59, 60), who bore untruthful testimony against Him.

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Joseph was faithful to the vision that God had given him in his youthful days. His life definitely proves that vision will restrain a person from sin (Prov. 29:18). He believed fully in what God had shown him—He remained steadfastly faithful and loyal in all his relationships, especially to God—He refused to give thought to any other pathway of life (i.e., pleasing men, etc.)—Even in prison he did not give in to human despair, but continued to believe God's promises. **Give a Scripture verse that summarizes the foundational truth Joseph clung to in order that he could go on to obtain the Lord's favor on his life, and in turn bless others.**

### **Genesis 39:20-Genesis 40:23**

His fellow prisoners had each of them a dream, and in interpreting them, Joseph declared that the butler should be delivered from prison, but to the baker he said, "Within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree, and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee" (40:19). It is not without good reason that the Holy Spirit has seen fit to record the details of these dreams. Connected with the spared one, the butler, we read of "the cup" into which the grapes were pressed (49:10-12), suggesting to us the precious Blood of the Lamb, by which all who believe are delivered. Connected with the one who was not delivered, the baker, were baskets full of bakemeats (40:16,17), suggesting human labors, the works of man's hands, which are powerless to deliver the sinner or justify him before God; for all such there is only the "Curse," referred to here by the baker being "hanged on a tree" (cf. Gal. 3:13). So it was at the Cross; the one thief went to Paradise; the other to Perdition.

In interpreting their dreams, Joseph foretold the future destiny of the butler and the baker. But observe that in doing this he was careful to ascribe the glory to Another, saying, "Do not interpretations belong to God?" (40:8). So the One whom Joseph foreshadowed, again and again, made known what should come to pass in the future, yet did he say, "For I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (John 12:49).

And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants; and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants. And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand. But he hanged the chief baker; as Joseph had interpreted to them" (40:20-22). Just as Joseph had interpreted so it came to pass. So shall it be with every word of the Son of God, Heaven and earth shall pass away, but His words shall not pass away. And O, unsaved reader, just as the solemn announcement of Joseph concerning the baker was actually fulfilled, so shall these words of the Lord Jesus be found true—"he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on Him" (John 3:36).

Said Joseph to the butler, "But think on me when it shall be well with thee" (40:14). So, in connection with the Supper, the Savior has said, "this do in remembrance of Me."

As we admire these lovely typical pictures, like the queen of Sheba, there is no more strength left in us, and we can only bow our heads and say, "How precious are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them!"

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Joseph's honor suffered much injustice. Yet God is seeing, remembering, and prospering Joseph. **Do you believe this is a test that God ordained for Joseph? Before you answer, read Psalm 105:16-22.**

### **Genesis 41:1-57**

This chapter opens by presenting to us the king of Egypt dreaming two dreams, and awaking with his spirit troubled. The court magicians and wise men were summoned, and Pharaoh told them his dreams, but "there was none that could interpret them to Pharaoh." Then it was that the chief butler recalled his experience in prison. He remembers how he had a dream, and that a Hebrew slave had interpreted aright its significance. He recounts this now to the king, and Pharaoh sends at once for Joseph, who explains to him the meaning of his own dreams. There are several important truths which here receive a striking exemplification:

First, we are shown that "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of waters. He turneth it whithersoever He will" (Prov. 21:1). It was no accident that Pharaoh dreamed as he did, and when he did. God's time had come for Joseph to be delivered from prison and exalted to a position of high honor and responsibility, and these dreams were but the instrument employed by God to accomplish this end. Similarly, He used, long afterwards, the sleeplessness of another king to lead to the deliverance of Mordecai and his fellows. This truth has been expressed so forcefully and ably by C.H.M. in His "Notes on Genesis," we cannot refrain from quoting him:

"The most trivial and the most important, the most likely and the most unlikely circumstances are made to minister to the development of God's purposes. In chapter 39 Satan uses Potiphar's wife, and in chapter 40 he uses Pharaoh's chief butler. The former he used to put Joseph into the dungeon; and the latter he used to keep him there, through his ungrateful negligence; but all in vain. God was behind the scenes. His finger was guiding all the springs of the vast machine of circumstances, and when the due time was come, he brought forth the man of His purpose, and set his feet in a large room. Now, this is ever God's prerogative. He is above all, and can use all for the accomplishment of His grand and unsearchable designs. It is sweet to be able thus to trace our Father's hand and counsel in everything. Sweet to know that all sorts of agents are at His sovereign disposal; angels, men and devils—*all are under His omnipotent hand*, and all are made to carry out His purposes" (italics are ours). How rarely one finds such faith-strengthening sentiments such as these set forth, plainly, by writers of today!

Second, we are shown in the early part of Genesis 41 how that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. As it is well known, Egypt stands in Scripture as a figure of this world. In Joseph's time, the land of the Pharaoh's was the center of learning and culture, the proud leader of the ancient civilizations. But the people were idolaters. They knew not God, and only in His light can we see light. Apart from Him, all is darkness, morally and spiritually. So we see it in the chapter before us. The magicians were impotent, the wise men displayed their ignorance, and Pharaoh was made to feel the powerlessness of all human resources and the worthlessness of all human wisdom.

Third, the man of God was the only one that had true wisdom and light. How true it is that "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him!" (Ps. 25:14). These dreams of Pharaoh had a prophetic significance: They respected the future of Egypt (typically, the world), and no Gentile, as such, had intelligence in the purpose of God respecting the earth. God was pleased to make known His counsels to a Gentile, as here, a Jew had to be called, each time, as interpreter. It was thus with Nebuchadnezzar. The wise men of Chaldea were as helpless as the magicians of Egypt; Daniel, alone, had understanding. So, too, with Belshazzar and all his companions—the aged prophet had to be called in to decipher the message upon the wall. Well would it be if leaders of the world today turned to the inspired writings of the Hebrew prophets of the things which must shortly come to pass.

Fourth: That "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose," is written large across our lesson. And well for us if we take this to heart. But the trouble is, we grow so impatient under the process, while God is taking the tangled threads of our lives and making them "work together for good." We become so occupied with present circumstances that hope is no longer exercised, and the brighter and better future is blotted from our view. Let us bear in mind that Scripture declares "Better is the end of a thing than the beginning

thereof" (Ecc. 7:8). Be of good cheer, faint heart; sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. So it was with Joseph. For a season he suffered wrongfully, but at the last God vindicated and rewarded him. Remember Joseph then, troubled reader, and "let patience have her perfect work."

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

**We ask that you now read Romans 8:18-21, especially noting verses 20 and 21 and after carefully reviewing, would you say that this famine in Egypt was a direct judgment from God upon their sinfulness, or was it part of God's subjecting creation to futility? In connection with this, every Christian is subject to times of discouragement, heartache and loss—such as Job went through, and his friends accused him of sin in his life. But God had other reasons—what were they?**

### **Genesis 42:1-44:34**

Since we left Genesis 37-38 nothing more has been heard of the family of Jacob. Joseph is the one upon whom the Holy Spirit has concentrated attention. In Genesis 37 we saw how Joseph was sent by his father on an errand of mercy to his brethren, inquiring after their welfare; that Joseph came unto them and they received him not; that, instead, they envied and hated him, and sold him into the hands of the Gentiles. Then, we have followed his career in Egypt, and have seen how that the Egyptians, too, treated him badly, casting him into the place of shame and humiliation. Also, we have seen how God vindicated His faithful servant, bringing him out of prison-house and making him governor of all Egypt. Finally, we have learned how that Joseph's exaltation was followed by a season of plenty, when the earth brought forth abundantly, and how this in turn, was followed by a grievous famine, when Joseph came before us as the dispenser of bread to a perishing humanity. But during all this time *the brethren* of Joseph faded from view, but now, in the time of famine they come to the front again.

All of this is deeply significant, and perfect in its typical application. Joseph foreshadowed the Beloved of the Father, sent to His brethren according to the flesh, seeking their welfare. But they despised and rejected Him. They sold Him, and delivered Him up to the Gentiles. The Gentiles unjustly condemned Him to death, and following the crucifixion, His body was placed in the prison of the tomb. In due time God delivered Him, and exalted Him to His own right hand. Following the ascension, Christ has been presented as the Savior of the world, the Bread of Life for a perishing humanity. During this dispensation the Jew is set aside: it is out from the Gentiles God is now taking a people for His name. But soon this dispensation shall have run its appointed course and then shall come the tribulation period when, following the removal of the Holy Spirit from the earth, there shall be a grievous time of spiritual famine. It is during this tribulation period that God shall resume His dealings with the Jews—the brethren of Christ according to the flesh. Hence, true to the anti-type, Joseph's brethren figure prominently in the closing chapters of Genesis.

In Genesis 37 the sons of Jacob are seen delivering up Joseph into the hands of the Gentiles, and nothing more is heard of them till we come to Genesis 42. And what do we read concerning them there! This: "Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down there, and buy for us from there; that we may live, and not die. And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt. And the sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan" (Gen. 42:1-3, 5). Canaan was smitten by the scourge of God. It was eaten up by a famine. Jacob and his family were in danger of dying, and the pangs of hunger drove the brethren of Joseph out of their land, and compelled them to journey down to Egypt—symbol of the world. This was a prophecy in action, a prophecy that received its tragic fulfillment two thousand years later. Just as a few years after his brethren had rejected Joseph, they were forced by a famine (sent from God) to leave their land and go down to Egypt, so a few years after the Jews had rejected Christ and delivered Him up to the Gentiles, God's judgment descended upon them, and the Romans drove them from their land, and dispersed them throughout the world.

"And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth. And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him" (Gen. 42:6, 8). Joseph had been exalted over all the house of Pharaoh, but Jacob knew it not. All these years he thought that Joseph was dead. And now his family is suffering from the famine, the scourge of God, and his sons, driven out of Canaan by the pangs of hunger, and going down to Egypt, they know not the one who was now governor of the land. So it has been with Jacob's descendants ever since the time they rejected their Messiah. They received not the love of the truth, and for this cause God has sent them strong delusion that they should believe a lie. They know not that God raised the Lord Jesus: they believe He is dead, and through all the long centuries of the Christian era a veil has been over their hearts, and the beginning of the tribulation period will find them still ignorant of the exaltation and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them" (Gen. 42:7). Yes, Joseph "saw" his brethren, his eye was upon them, even though they knew him not. So the eye of the Lord Jesus has been upon the Jews all through the long night of their rejection. Hear His words (as Jehovah) through Jeremiah the prophet, "*For mine eyes are upon all their ways:* they

are not hid from My face, neither is their iniquity hid from Mine 'Eyes'" (Gen. 16:17). So, too, through Hosea, He said, "I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from Me" (Gen. 5:3).

"And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them . . . and he put them all together into ward three days" (Gen. 42:7, 17). We quote here from the impressive words of Dr. Haldeman: "Joseph was the cause of their troubles now. Joseph was punishing them for their past dealing with himself. The secret of all Judah's suffering during the past centuries is to be found in the fact that the rejected Messiah has been dealing 'roughly' with them. He has been punishing them, making use of their willfulness and the cupidity of the nations, but, all the same, punishing them. 'My God will cast them away, because they do not hearken unto Him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations' (Hos. 9:17). 'For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.' (Matthew 23:38, 39) 'That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zecharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation (nation)' (Matthew 23:35, 36). Nothing can account for the unparalleled suffering of this people, but the judgment and discipline of the Lord."

(Gleanings from Genesis, A. W. Pink)

### **It is easy to understand why Joseph's brothers were put through this mental torture but why Jacob?**

Gen. 42:36

### **Genesis 45:1-28**

"And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him, for they were *troubled* at his presence" (Gen. 45:3). How perfectly does antitype correspond with type! When Israel shall first gaze upon their rejected Messiah, we are told, "And they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall *mourn* for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his first born" (Zech. 12:10). As Israel shall learn then the awfulness of their sin in rejecting and crucifying their Messiah, they shall be "troubled" indeed.

"And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near, And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me here; for God did send me before you to preserve life . . . Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them, and after that his brethren talked with him" (Gen. 45:4, 5, 15). So shall it be when Israel is reconciled to Christ; "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech. 13:1). Then shall Christ say to Israel, "For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid My face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer" (Isa. 54:7, 8).

"And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren, And he *wept aloud*" (Gen. 45:1-2). Seven times over we read of Joseph weeping. He wept when he listened to his brethren confessing their guilt (Gen. 42:24). He wept when he beheld Benjamin (Gen. 43:30). He wept when he made himself known to his brethren (Gen. 45:1-2). He wept when his brethren were reconciled to him (Gen. 45:15). He wept over his father Jacob (Gen. 46:29). He wept at the death of his father (Gen. 50:1). And he wept when, later, his brethren questioned his love for them (Gen. 50:15-17).

(Gleanings from Genesis, A. W. Pink)

### **When and why did Jesus weep?**

### **Genesis 46:1-34**

"And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Jacob his father" (Gen. 46:29). Says Dr. Haldeman, "This is really the epiphany of Joseph. He reveals himself in splendor and Kingliness to his people. He meets Judah in Goshen first and then meets his father, the household of Jacob. This is a representation of the truth as we have already seen it. It is the coming of Christ in His glory to meet Judah first, and then all Israel. Our attention is specially drawn to his appearing to the people in chariots of glory. So of the greater Joseph we read, 'For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and *with His chariots* like a whirlwind' (Isa. 66:15)."

(Gleanings from Genesis, A. W. Pink)

### **Genesis 47:1-31**

“And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly” (47:27). Goshen was the best part of the land of Egypt (symbol of the world). As Pharaoh had said, “The land of Egypt is before thee, in *the best of the land* make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell” (47:6). So Palestine, when restored to its pristine beauty and fertility, shall be “the best land” in all the earth; and there, in the Millennium, shall Israel have “possessions” and “multiply exceedingly.”

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

### Genesis 48:1-22

Jacob was now about to die, and he wishes to bless the two sons of Joseph. Joseph had his own desires and wishes on this subject and his desire was that Manasseh, the first-born, should receive the blessing. Accordingly, he placed Manasseh at Jacob's left hand and Ephraim at his right, so that Jacob's right hand might rest on the head of Manasseh and his left on Ephraim. But though Jacob's natural eyesight was dim, his spiritual discernment was not. Deliberately, Jacob crossed his hands “guiding his hands wittingly” (48:14), or, as the Hebrew reads, literally, “he made his hands to understand.” Note it is expressly said that “Israel” did this: it was the new man that was acting, not the old man, “Jacob.” And “by faith” he blessed both the sons of Joseph. Truly, it was not by sight or reason. What was more unlikely than that these two young Egyptian princes, for this is virtually what they were, should ever forsake Egypt, the land of their birth, and migrate to Canaan! How unlikely, too, that each should become a separate tribe. And how improbable that the younger should be exalted above the elder, both in importance and number, and should become “a multitude of peoples” (48:19). How impossible for him to foresee (by any human deduction) that long centuries afterwards Ephraim should become representative of the kingdom of “Israel,” as distinct from “Judah.” But he had heard God, rested on His word, and believed in the sure fulfillment of His promise. What a grand display of faith! Nature's eyes might be dim, but faith's vision was sharp: in his bodily weakness the strength of faith was perfected.

After blessing Joseph's sons, Jacob turns to their father and says, “Behold, I die; but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers” (48:21). How utterly unlikely this appeared! Joseph was now thoroughly established and settled in Egypt. But no longer is Jacob walking by sight. Firm indeed was his confidence, and with an unshaken faith he grasps firmly the promises of God (that his seed should enter Canaan), and speaks out of a heart filled with assurance.

(Gleanings in Genesis, A.W. Pink)

Jacob did indeed become a man wholly filled with faith in his God. Also, as we have seen in the earlier lessons, Jacob's life also portrays step-by-step the complete history of the nation of Israel, and they, as a whole, have yet to grasp God's plan and place their faith fully in Him, and the Son, whom God sent to be their Messiah. **Please read Romans 9:6-15, then comment on Israel's rejection and God's purpose. Following this, read Romans 9:1-5, where Paul's deep love for his brethren, the people of Israel, helps us to understand how we are to care for and earnestly pray for ALL who as yet are not in the family of God. Comment as you feel led.**

### Genesis 49:1-33

We have at last reached the closing scene in Jacob's life. Here and there we have beheld the light of heaven shining on and through our patriarch, but only too often the clouds of earth have obscured it. The struggle between the flesh and the spirit in him was fierce and protracted, but as the end drew near the triumphs of grace, and the faith which overcomes the world, were more and more manifest.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the scene presented to us in Genesis 49. Long years before, God had promised to give the land of Palestine to Abraham and his descendants. This promise had been confirmed to Isaac, and renewed to Jacob. But, up to this time, there had been no visible signs that the promise was about to be made good. Abraham and Isaac had been but “strangers and pilgrims” in Canaan, owning none of it save a burying-ground for their dead, and this they had purchased. Jacob, too, had “dwelt in tabernacles (tents) with Abraham and Isaac” (Heb. 11:9). And now Jacob is dying—dying not in the promised land, but many miles away from it. In a strange country, in Egypt, our patriarch prepares to leave this earthly scene; but despite the feebleness of nature, the vigor of his faith was strikingly manifested.

Jacob summoned to his bedside each of his twelve sons, and proceeded to utter one of the most striking predictions to be found in all the Old Testament. Like most prophecies, this one of our dying patriarch has, at least, a double fulfillment. In its ultimate accomplishment it looks forward to the fortunes of the Twelve Tribes in “the last days” (Gen. 49:1); that is, it contemplates their several conditions and positions as they will be in the End-time, namely, during the Seventieth Week of Daniel and on into the millennium (cf. Jer. 23:19, 29; Isa. 2:2 for the “last days” of Israel). Concerning the final fulfillment of Jacob's prophecy we cannot now write; instead, we shall note how strikingly the past history of the descendants of Jacob's twelve sons has corresponded with their father's dying utterance:

"Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father. Reuben, thou art my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power. Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel, because thou wentest up to thy father's bed, then defilest thou it; he went up to my couch" (Gen. 49:2-4). Three things are here said of Reuben: First, as the first-born son of Jacob, the place of "excellency," the position of dignity, was his natural birthright. Second, this position of preeminency had been forfeited through his sin in defiling his father's bed, and Jacob here foretells that the tribe which is to descend from Reuben "Shalt not excel." Third, Jacob also predicted that this tribe should be "unstable as water," which is a figurative expression taken from the passing away of water which had dried up like a summer stream. We shall now refer to several passages in the Old Testament which treat of Reuben, showing how the fortunes of this tribe verified the words of the dying patriarch.

Let us turn first to 1 Chronicles 5:1, 2: "Now the sons of Reuben, the first-born of Israel (for he was the firstborn); but, for as much as he defiled his father's bed his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph, the son of Israel; and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright. For Judah prevailed *above* his brethren, and of him (*viz.*, of Judah, instead of Reuben as it ought to-have been) came the Chief Ruler (*i.e.*, Christ); but the birthright was Joseph's." In this striking passage the "birthright" refers, of course, to the position of excellency, and this, as Jacob declared it should be, was taken away from Reuben and given to the sons of Joseph (they receiving the double or "first-born's" portion); and Judah, not Reuben, becoming the royal tribe from which Messiah sprang, and thus "prevailing" above his brethren. Verily, then, Reuben did not "excel."

Second, as we trace the fortunes of this tribe through the Old Testament it will be found that in nothing did they "excel." From this tribe came no judge, no king, and no prophet. This tribe (together with Gad) settled down on the wilderness side of the Jordan, saying, "Bring us not over Jordan" (Num. 32:5). From this same scripture it appears that the tribe of Reuben was, even then, but a cattle loving one—"now the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of cattle; and when they saw the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead, that, behold, the place was a place for cattle . . . came and spoke unto Moses and Eleazar the priest saying . . . the country which the Lord smote before the congregation of Israel, is a land for cattle, and thy servants have cattle. Wherefore, said they, if we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and bring us not over Jordan" (Num. 32:1-5). With this agrees Judges 5:15, 16: "For the divisions of Reuben there were great thoughts of heart. Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks. For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart." When the land was divided among the tribes in the days of Joshua, the portion allotted to Reuben served, again, to fulfill the prophecy of Jacob—it was the southernmost and smallest on the east of Jordan.

Third, this tribe was to be "unstable as water," it was to dry up like a stream in summer; it was, in other words, to enjoy no numerical superiority. In harmony with this was the prophecy of Moses concerning Reuben—"Let Reuben live, and not die; and (or "but") let his men be few." Note, that at the first numbering of the tribes, Reuben had 46,500 men able to go forth to war (Num. 1:21), but when next they were numbered they showed a slight decrease—43,730. (Num. 26:7). This is the more noteworthy because most of the other tribes registered an increase. Remark, too, that Reuben was among those who stood on Mount Ebal to "curse," not among those who stood on Mount Gerizim to "bless" (See Deut. 27:12, 13). In 1 Chronicles 26:31, 32, we read: "In the fortieth year of the reign of David they were sought for, and there were found among them mighty men of valor at Jazer of Gilead. And his brethren, men of valor, were two thousand and seven hundred chief fathers, whom king David made rulers over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, for every matter pertaining to God, and affairs of the king." It is also deeply significant to discover that when Jehovah commenced to inflict His judgments upon Israel we are told, "In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short; and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel; from Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Arser, which is by the River Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan" (2 Kings 10:32, 33). Thus it will be found throughout; at no point did Reuben "excel"—his dignity and glory completely dried up!

"Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. O my Soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united; for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they digged down a wall. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel; I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel" (Gen. 49:5-7). What a proof are these verses of the Divine Inspiration of the scriptures! Had Moses been left to himself he surely would have left out this portion of Jacob's prophecy, seeing that he was himself a descendant of the tribe of Levi!

Simeon and Levi are here linked together and are termed "instruments of cruelty." The historic reference is, no doubt, to Genesis 34:25, where we read: "And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males." It would seem from the fact that Simeon's name is here mentioned first that he was the leader in that wickedness. It is not unlikely that Simeon was also the one who took the lead in the conspiracy to get rid of Joseph, for Simeon was the one whom Joseph "bound" (Gen. 42:24) ere he sent his brethren back to Jacob. It is highly interesting to notice how that the later references to this tribe correspond in character with what we know of their ancestor. For example: When Judah went up to secure his portion in Canaan, he called upon Simeon to help him (Judg. 1:3), as if summoning to his aid the men who possessed the old fierceness of their progenitor. "And Judah said unto Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot—so Simeon went with him." And so again, we read in 1 Chronicles 4:42, 43: "And some of them, even of the sons of Simeon, five hundred men,

went to Mount Seir, having for their captains Pelatiah, and Neariah, and Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi. And they smote the rest of the Amalekites that were escaped, and dwelt there unto this day."

Concerning Levi it is interesting to note that when Moses came down from the mount and saw Israel worshipping the calf, that when he said, "Who is on the Lord's side?" we read, "All the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him, and he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. And the Children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men" (Ex. 32:27, 28). Beautiful is it, also, to learn how similar devotion to the Lord and boldness in acting for Him cancelled Jacob's "curse" and secured Jehovah's blessing. In Numbers 25:6-13 we are told: "And, behold, one of the Children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the Children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And when Phineas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand; and went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the Children of Israel. And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand. And the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, Phineas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned My wrath away from the Children of Israel, while he was zealous for My sake among them, that I consumed not the Children of Israel in My jealousy. Wherefore say, behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace; and he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the Children of Israel." Thus the "curse" on Levi was revoked. Levi was first joined to Simeon in cruelty, but after, he was joined to the Lord in grace!

That which is most prominent, however, in Jacob's prophecy concerning the tribes of Simeon and Levi is that they were to be "divided" and "scattered" in Israel. (See Gen. 49:7). And most literally and remarkably was this fulfilled. When the land was divided in the days of Joshua, we learn that Simeon received not a separate territory in Canaan, but obtained his portion within the allotment of Judah (see Josh. 19:1-8): thus the Simeonites were necessarily "scattered," being dispersed among the cities of Judah. So it was with the Levites also; their portion was the forty-eight cities which were scattered throughout the inheritance of the other tribes. (See Num. 35:8; Josh. 14:4; Josh. 21). Thus, while each of the other tribes had a separate portion which enabled them to be congregated together, the descendants of Simeon and Levi were "divided" and "scattered." Exactly as Jacob had, centuries before, declared they should be!

"Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The scepter shall not depart from Judah nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk" (Gen. 49:8-12).

This part of Jacob's prophecy concerning Judah finds its ultimate fulfillment in Christ. With it should be coupled 1 Chronicles 5:2: "Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him is the Chief Ruler," a "Prince"; the Hebrew word here is "Nagid" and is the same term which is translated "Messiah the Prince" in Daniel 9:24. It was from this tribe our Lord came. Returning now to the words of Jacob.

First, we are told of Judah: "Through art he whom thy brethren shall praise." The word here for "praise" is always used of praise or worship which is offered to God! Christ is the One who shall yet receive the praise and worship of His "brethren" according to the flesh, namely, Israel. Second, of Judah, Jacob said. "Thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee" (Gen. 49:8). So, again, Christ is the One who shall yet have dominion over Israel and subdue their enemies. This dominion of the tribe of Judah commenced in the days of David, who was the first king from that tribe; and it was during his reign that Judah's hand was "in the neck of" their "enemies." Third, the destinies of the tribe of Judah is here contemplated under the figure of a "lion," which at once reminds us of Revelation 5:5, where the Lord Jesus is expressly denominated "The Lion of the Tribe of Judah."

In dealing with the destinies of the tribe of Judah under the figure of a "lion," it is to be observed that this tribe's history is contemplated under three distinct stages, according to the growth or age of the lion. First, we have "a lion's whelp," then "a lion," lastly "an old lion"—the gradual growth in power of this tribe being here set forth. We would suggest that this looks at the tribe of Judah first from the days of Joshua up to the time of Saul; then we have the full grown lion in the days of the fierce warrior David; lastly, from Solomon's reign and onwards we have the "old lion."

"The scepter shall not depart from Judah; nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be" (Gen. 49:10). This calls for a separate word. The Hebrew term for "scepter" here is translated "tribe" in verses 16 and 28 of this same chapter—according to its usage in scripture it signifies the tribal-rod or staff of office which belonged to any tribe and was the ensign of authority. This part of Jacob's prophecy, then, intimated that the tribal-rod should not depart from Judah until a certain eminent Personage had come; in other words, that Judah should retain both its tribal distinctness and separate authority until Shiloh, the Messiah, had appeared. And most remarkably was this prophecy fulfilled. The separate Kingdom of Israel (the Ten Tribes) was destroyed at an early date, but Judah was still in the land when Messiah came.

It is further to be noted that Jacob declared of Judah that there should not depart from this tribe "a lawgiver until Shiloh." It is a striking fact that after Shiloh had come the legal authority vested in this tribe disappeared, as is evident from John 18:31: "Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye Him, and judge Him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him: It is not lawful for *us* to put any man to death." What a remarkable confession this was! It was an admission that they were no longer their own governors, but instead, under the dominion of a foreign power. He that has the power to condemn an offender to death is the governor or "lawgiver" of a country. It is "not lawful for us" said Caiaphas and his associates—you, the Roman governor, alone, can pass sentence of death on Jesus of Nazareth. By their own admission Genesis 49:10 had received its fulfillment. No longer had they a "lawgiver" of their own stock! By their "words" they were "condemned" (Matthew 12:37). The "scepter" had departed, the "lawgiver" had disappeared, therefore—Shiloh must have come.

"Unto Him shall the gathering of the people be" looks forward to Christ's second coming, as also do the words that follow: "Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes. His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk" (Gen. 49:11, 12). The reference here seems to be a double one: first to the tribe of Judah, second to Christ Himself. Judah's portion in the land was the vine-growing district in the South. (See 2 Chron. 26:9, 10) Note, too, in Song of Solomon 1:14 that we read of "the vineyards of Engedi" and in Joshua 25:62 we learn that "Engedi" was one of the cities of Judah; note further Joshua 15:55 that Carmel was also included in Judah's portion. The application of Genesis 49:11, 12, to our Lord may be seen by comparing Isaiah 63:1-3: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art Thou red in Thine apparel, and Thy garments like Him that treadeth in the winevat?—compare above 'he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes'—I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with Me: for I will tread them in Mine anger, and trample them in My fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments."

"Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for a haven of ships; and his border shall be unto Zidon" (Gen. 49:13). In blessing his children Jacob here passes from his fourth to his tenth son. Why should he do this? Everything in scripture is perfect. Not only is its every word Divinely inspired, but the very arrangement of its words also evidences the handiwork of the Holy Spirit. God is a God of order, and every diligent student discovers this everywhere in His word. When blessing his fourth son we found that the words of our dying patriarch manifestly looked forward to Christ Himself, who, according to the flesh, sprang from this tribe of Judah. Hence, because of the close connection of our Lord with the land of Zebulun during the days of His earthly sojourn, these two tribes are here placed in juxtaposition. Having spoken of the tribe of which our Lord was *born*, we have next mentioned the tribe in whose territory He *lived* for thirty years. This is, we believe, the main reason why the tenth son of Jacob is placed immediately after the fourth.

The part played by the tribe of Zebulun in the history of the nation of Israel was not a conspicuous one, but though referred to but rarely as a tribe, each time they do come before us it is in a highly honorable connection. First, we read of them in Judges 5, where Deborah celebrates in song Israel's victory over Jabin and Sisera, and recounts the parts taken by the different tribes. Of Zebulun and Naphtali she says, "*Zebulun* and Naphtali were a people that jeopardized their lives unto the death in the high places of the field" (v. 18). Again, in 1 Chronicles 12, where we have enumerated those who "Came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul to him" (verse 33), concerning Zebulun we read, "*Of Zebulun*, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could keep rank, *they were not of double heart.*" And again, in this same chapter, "Moreover they that were nigh them, even unto Issachar *and Zebulun* and Naphtali, brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen, and on meat, meal, cakes of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly: for there was joy in Israel!" (1 Chron. 12:40).

Jacob's prophecy concerning the tribe, which was to spring from his tenth son, referred, mainly, to the *position* they were to occupy in the land of Canaan, and also to the *character* of the people themselves. Moses' prophecy concerning the twelve tribes, recorded in Deuteronomy 33, is very similar to that of Jacob's with respect to Zebulun: "And of Zebulun he said, Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out (*i.e.*, to sea); and, Issachar, in thy tents. They shall call the people unto *the* mountain (*i.e.* Zion); there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall suck of the abundance of *the seas*, and of treasures hid in the sand" (vv. 18, 19).

The character of Zebulun as here outlined by Jacob is very different from that of Judah, who is pictured as dwelling, more or less, apart from the other tribes—as a lion "*gone up from the prey*;" very different, too, from Issachar, here referred to as an ass crouching down in lazy sloth. (see vv. 14, 15). Zebulun was to be a commercial and seafaring tribe. When Jacob said of Zebulun, "his border shall be unto Zidon," which was in Phoenicia, he implied that it would take part in Phoenician commerce.

The portion which fell to the tribe of Zebulun (Josh. 19:10, 11), together with that of the tribe of Naphtali which joined theirs, became known as "Galilee of the Gentiles." (See Matthew 4:15). These Galileans were to be an energetic, enterprising people, who were to mingle freely with the nations. The prophecy of Moses concerning Zebulun, to which we have already referred, clearly establishes this fact (see Deut. 33:18, 19), and, plainly looked forward to New Testament times, when the men of Galilee took such a prominent part as the first heralds of the Cross. Note that Moses said, "*Rejoice Zebulun, in thy going out.*" Is it not remarkable that no less than eleven out of the twelve apostles of Christ were



men of *Galilee*—Judas alone being an exception! How beautiful are the next prophetic words of Moses in this connection: "They shall call the people unto the mountain: there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness!" (Deut. 33:19).

One other word concerning Jacob's prophecy about Zebulun. Of this tribe he said, "He shall be *for a haven* of ships." Galilee was to provide a refuge, a harbor, a place where the storm-tossed ships might anchor at rest. And here it was that Joseph and Mary, with the Christ Child, found a "haven" after their return from Egypt! Here it was the Lord Jesus dwelt until the beginning of His public ministry. And note, too, John 12:1, "After these things Jesus walked in *Galilee*: for He would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill Him." Galilee was still a "*haven*" to Him!

"Issachar is a strong ass couching down between two burdens: And he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant; and he bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute" (Gen. 49:14, 15). Upon these verses the writer has but little light. It is difficult to determine the precise force and significance of the several statements that Jacob made here concerning his fifth son; nor is it easy to trace the fulfillment of them in the record of the tribe which sprang from him. One thing is clear, however: to compare a man (or a tribe) to an "ass" is, today, a figure of reproach, but it was not so in Jacob's time. In Israel, the ass was not looked upon with contempt; instead, it was an honorable animal. Not only was it a useful beast of burden, but people of rank rode on them. (See Judges 10:4; 12:14). Until the days of Solomon Israel had no horses, being forbidden by Jehovah to rear them (see Deut. 17:16); but asses were as common and as useful among them as horses are now among us. The "ass" was a reminder to Israel that they were a peculiar (separated) people, whose trust was to be in the Lord and not in horses and chariots, which were the confidence of the other nations of antiquity.

"Issachar is termed by Jacob a "strong ass," and the fulfillment of this portion of Jacob's prophecy is clearly discovered in the subsequent history of this tribe. In Numbers 26, where we have recorded the second numbering of those among the tribes which were able to go forth to war, we find that only Judah and Dan out of the twelve tribes were numerically stronger than Issachar, and Dan had but one hundred fighting men more than Issachar. Again, in the days of the Kings, the tribe of Issachar had become stronger still, for while in Numbers 26:25, we read that the number of their men able to go forth to war were 64,300, in 1 Chronicles 7:5 we are told, "And the brethren among all the families of Issachar were valiant men of might, reckoned in all by the genealogies 87,000!"

"Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse's heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord" (Gen. 49:16-18). With this prophecy of Jacob concerning the tribe of Dan compare this prophecy with that of Moses, recorded in Deuteronomy 33:22, "And of Dan he said, Dan is a lion's whelp: he shall leap from Bashan." It is to be seen that both predicted *evil* of that tribe, around which there seems to be a cloud of mystery.

The first thing that Scripture records of Dan is his low birth. (See Gen. 30:1-6). Next, he is brought before us in Genesis 37:2, though he is not there directly mentioned by name. It is highly significant that of the four sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, *Dan* was the oldest, being at that time twenty years of age, and so, most likely, the *ringleader* in the "evil" which Joseph reported to their father. Next, in Genesis 46, reference is made to the children of Jacob's sons: the descendants of Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and the others, being specifically named in order. But when *Dan* is reached, the names of *his* sons are not given; instead, they are simply called by the tribal name—Hushim or Shuham. (See Gen. 46:23). This is the more striking, because in Numbers 26 we meet with the same thing again: the children born to each of Jacob's twelve sons are carefully enumerated until Dan is reached, and then, as in Genesis 46, *his descendants are not named*, simply the tribal title being given. (See Num. 26:42). This concealment of the names of Dan's children is the first indication of that silent "blotting out" of his name, which meets us in *the total omission* of this tribe from the genealogies recorded in 1 Chronicles 2 to 10, as well as in Revelation 7, where, again, no mention is made of any being "sealed" out of the tribe of Daniel. There seems to have been an unwillingness on the part of the Holy Spirit to even mention *this tribe* by name. In cases where the names of all the tribes *are* given, Dan is generally far down, often last of all, in the list. For example, we read in Numbers 10:25, "And the standard of the camp of the children of Dan set forward, which was *the rearward of all the camps* throughout their hosts." Again, Dan was *the last* of the tribes to receive his inheritance when Joshua divided up the land—"This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families, these cities with their villages. When they had *made an end* of dividing the land for inheritance by their coasts, the children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua" (Josh. 19:47-49). Note again that in 1 Chronicles 27:16-22, where all the tribes are referred to, Dan is mentioned *last!*

Putting together the several prophecies of Jacob and Moses we find two traits met in *Dan*—*treachery* "a serpent by the way, an adder in the path"; and *cruelty*: "Dan is a *lion's whelp*; he shall leap from Bashan." In Judges 18 the Holy Spirit has recorded at length how these predictions received their first fulfillment. The attack of this tribe on Laish was serpentine in its cunning and lionlike in its cruel execution. Then it was that Dan leaped from Bashan, and from the slopes of Mount Hermon (which was in the territory of this tribe) like a young lion and like an adder springing on its prey. From Judges 18:30 we learn that Dan was the first of the tribes to fall into Idolatry. Apparently they remained in this awful condition right until the days of Jeroboam, for we find that when this apostate king set up his two golden calves, saying, "Behold thy gods, O Israel," he set up one in Bethel and "the other put he in *Dan*" (1 Kings 12:28, 29). And, as late as the time of Jehu these two golden calves were still standing, and it is a significant and solemn fact that though there was a great reformation in his day, so that the prophets and worshippers of Baal were slain and the images were burned and the house of Baal was broken down, yet we are told, "Howbeit, from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel

to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, to wit, the golden calves that were in Bethel, and that were in *Dan*" (2 Kings 10:29).

One other item in Jacob's prophecy concerning this tribe remains to be noticed—"Dan shall *judge* his people." This received a partial fulfillment in the days of Samson—though we doubt not that its final fulfillment awaits the time of the great tribulation. Joshua 19:41 informs us that among the towns allotted to this tribe were Zorah and Eshtaol. Compare with this Judges 13:2, which tells us that the parents of Samson belonged to the tribe of Dan and had their home in Zorah. How remarkably the prophecies of Jacob and Moses combined in the person of Samson (one of Israel's "judges") is apparent on the surface. Serpent-like methods and the lion's strength characterized each step in his strange career. How Samson "bit," as it were, "the horse's heels" in his death!

It is to be noted that after Jacob had completed his prophecy concerning Dan, and ere he took up the next tribe, that he said, "I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord" (Gen. 49:18). This is very striking and significant, coming in just where it does. Having spoken of Dan as "a *serpent* by the way," the Holy Spirit seems to have brought to his mind the words spoken by God to that old Serpent the Devil, recorded in Genesis 3:15. The eye of the dying patriarch looks beyond the "Serpent" to the one who shall yet "bruise his head," and therefore does he say, "I have waited for *Thy salvation*, O Lord." No doubt these very words will yet be appropriated in a coming day by the godly remnant among the Jews. If, as it has been generally held by prophetic students, both ancient and modern, both among Jews and Gentiles, that the Anti-Christ will spring from this tribe of Dan, the ancient prophecy of Jacob concerning the descendants of this son will then receive its final fulfillment. Then, in a supreme manner, will Dan (in the person of the Anti-Christ) "*judge*" and rule over "his people," *i.e.*, Israel; then, will *Dan* be a "serpent in the way" and "an adder in the path," then will he treacherously and cruelly "bite the horse's heels." And then, too, will that faithful company, who refuse to worship the Beast or receive his "mark," cry, "I have *waited* for Thy salvation, O Lord?"

"Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last" (Gen. 49:19). The Hebrew word for troop here signifies a marauding or plundering troop. The cognate (relation) to this word is rendered "companies" in 2 Kings 5:2—"And the Syrians had gone out by *companies*, and had brought away *captive* out of the land of Israel a little maid." The same word is translated "bands" in 2 Kings 24:2—"And the Lord sent against him *bands* of the Chaldees, and *bands* of the Syrians, and *bands* of the Moabites, and *bands* of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to *destroy* it, according to the Word of the Lord, which He spake by His servants, the prophets." When, therefore, Jacob said of this tribe, "*Gad*, a troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at the last," the reference seems to be to alternate defeat and victory. This tribe was to be in a constant state of warfare, leading like the Bedouin Arabs a wandering, wild, and unsettled existence. One wonders whether the (slangy) expression "Gad about" may not have its origin in the character of this tribe.

We may notice, once more, how closely parallel with this prediction of Jacob is the prophecy of Moses concerning this tribe: "And of Gad he said, Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad: he dwelleth as a lion, and teareth the arm with the crown of the head. And he provided the first part for himself, because there, in a portion of the lawgiver, was he seated" (Deut. 33:20, 21). The first part of this prophecy emphasizes the unsettled and warlike character of Gad. The second statement that Gad "provided the first part (of the inheritance) for himself," has reference to the fact that this tribe sought and obtained as their portion the land on the east side of the Jordan, and this *before* Canaan was divided among the tribes in the days of Joshua. This portion of Gad's became known as "the land of Gilead" (See Deut. 3:12-15). Note, further, that Moses said, "Blessed be he that *enlargeth* Gad." The fulfillment of this may be seen by a reference to 1 Chronicles 5:16, where we read that the children of Gad dwelt in "all the suburbs of Sharon." Note that in Joshua 13:24-28 no mention is made of *Sharon*: their border was thus "enlarged!"

The position that Gad occupied was a precarious one. Being cut off from that of the other tribes, they were more or less isolated. They were open, constantly, to the attacks from the desert bands or troops, such as the Ammonites and Midianites, and consequently, they lived in a continual state of warfare. Jacob's words were being repeatedly fulfilled. Gad suffered severely from their lack of faith and enterprise in asking for the territory they did. Their choice was almost as bad as Lot's, and proved as disastrous, for they were among the first tribes that were carried into captivity. (See 1 Chron. 5:26).

For particular illustrations of the fulfillment of Jacob's prophecy we may note the following: "And it came to pass in process of time, that the children of Ammon made war against Israel." Note now, the portion of Israel which they assailed: "And it was so, that when the children of Ammon made war against Israel, the elders of *Gilead* went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob: and they said unto Jephthah, Come, and be our captain, that *we* may fight with the children of Ammon. Then Jephthah went with the elders of *Gilead*, and the people made him captain over them: and Jephthah uttered all his words before the Lord in Mizpah. And Jephthah sent messengers unto the king of the children of Ammon, saying, What hast thou to do with me, that thou art come against me to fight in *my* land? (Judg. 11:4-6, 11, 12). "Then Nahash the Ammonite came up, and encamped against *Jabesh-gilead*: and all the men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee" (1 Sam. 11:1). But in the End-time Gad "shall overcome." It is to this, we believe, that Jeremiah 49:1-2, refers: "Concerning the Ammonites thus saith the Lord; hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? why then doth their king inherit Gad, and his people dwell in his cities? Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will cause an alarm of war to be heard in Rabbah of the Ammonites; and it shall be a desolate heap, and her daughters shall be burned with fire: *then* shall Israel be heir unto them that were his heirs, said the Lord." And again in

Zephaniah 2:8-9, "I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the revilings of the children of Ammon, whereby they have reproached My people, and magnified themselves against their border. Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles and salt pits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of My people shall spoil them, and the remnant of My people *shall possess them.*"

"Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties" (Gen. 49:20). Asher's descendants, in common with the tribes of Zebulun, Naphtali and Issachar, were settled in the northern part of Palestine, which was called by the general name of "Galilee of the Gentiles," which name was perfectly appropriate to Asher, for from first to last this was a half Gentile tribe. Asher's territory lay in the extreme north of Palestine between Mount Lebanon and the Mediterranean Sea, and included within its borders the celebrated cities of Tyre and Sidon (See Josh. 19:24-31). The portion of this tribe was better known by its Grecian name of Phoenicia, which means "land of the palms," so designated because of the luxuriant palms which abounded there. It was to this land, preeminently rich and beautiful, Jacob's prediction looked.

"Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and *he shall yield ROYAL dainties.*" Let us turn now to a few Scriptures which furnish illustrations of the repeated fulfillment of Jacob's prophecy.

"And Hiram, king of Tyre, sent messengers to *David*, and cedar trees and carpenters and masons, and *they built David a house*" (2 Sam. 5:11). This city of Tyre was, as pointed out above, within the territory of the tribe of Asher (Josh. 19:29), and here we learn how the *king* of Tyre yielded or provided "royal dainties" by furnishing both material and workmen for building a house for king David.

We behold a repetition of this in the days of Solomon. In 1 Kings 5 we read: "And Hiram, king of Tyre, sent his servants unto Solomon, for he had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father: for Hiram was ever a lover of David. And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying, Thou knowest how that David, my father, could not build a house unto the name of the Lord his God, for the wars which were about him on every side, until the Lord put them under the soles of his feet. But now the Lord my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrent. And, behold, I purpose to build a house unto the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord spake unto David, my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build a house unto my name. Now, therefore, command thou that they hew me cedar trees out of Lebanon; and my servants shall be with thy servants; and unto thee will I give hire for thy servants according to all that thou shalt appoint: for thou knowest that there is not among us any that can skill to hew timbers like unto the Sidonians. And it came to pass, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly, and said, Blessed be the Lord this day, which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people. And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, I have considered the things which thou sentest to me for: and I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of fir. My servants shall bring them down from Lebanon unto the sea, and I will convey them by sea in floats unto the place that thou shalt appoint me, and will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive them: and thou shalt accomplish my desire, in giving food for my household. *So Hiram gave Solomon cedar trees and fir trees according to all his desire*" (1 Kings 5:1-10). Thus again do we see how Asher "yielded royal dainties."

Jacob also said: "Out of Asher his *bread* shall be fat." Is it not striking to discover that in the time of famine in the days of Elijah that God sent his prophet to the widow in Zarephath, saying: "Behold, I have commanded a widow woman *there to sustain thee*" (1 Kings 17:9). Note Zarephath was in Sidon (see Luke 4:26) and Sidon was in *Asher's* territory (Josh. 19:28). In 2 Chronicles 30, we have another illustration, along a different line, of how Asher yielded "*royal dainties.*" It was at the time of a great religious revival in Israel. King Hezekiah "sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, *to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel*" (2 Chron. 30:1). Then we are told, "So the posts passed from city to city, through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, even unto Zebulun: *but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them*" (2 Chron. 30:10). But in marked and blessed contrast from this we read: "Nevertheless, divers of *Asher* and Manasseh and of Zebulun *humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem*" (2 Chron. 30:11).

The New Testament supplies us with two more illustrations. In Luke 2 we learn of how one who belonged to this Tribe of Asher yielded a most blessed "*dainty*" to Israel's new-born King, even the Lord Jesus. For when His parents brought the Child Jesus into the Temple, following the beautiful Song of Simeon, we read, "And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the Tribe of *Asher*; she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity. And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the Temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant *gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of Him* to all that looked for redemption in Jerusalem" (Luke 2:36-38).

Finally, note in Acts 27 we are told that when the apostle Paul was being carried prisoner to Rome, that when the ship reached *Sidon* (which was in the borders of Asher) that "Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to *refresh himself*" (Acts 27:3). Thus, once more, do we read of "bread" out of Asher.

"Naphtali is a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words" (Gen. 49:21). The word Naphtali means "wrestling" (see Gen. 30:8). "Naphtali is a hind let loose"; it was as though Jacob said, Naphtali is as a deer caught in the toils of the hunters, hemmed in by them, but by his struggles she escapes from their snares. Naphtali would be a hind "let loose." This expression has a double meaning. In the Hebrew the word signifies, first, "sent" or "sent forth," just as a stag driven from his covert goes forth, scattering his pursuers. But the word also means "let loose" or "let go." It is the term used of Noah

when he "sent forth" the raven and the dove from the ark; as also of the priest, when at the cleansing of the leper, he let go or let loose the living bird. The word expresses the joy of an animal which has been made captive and, in its recovered liberty, bounds forth in gladness, just as we have often seen a dog jumping for joy after it has been unchained. Jacob, then, pictures Naphtali rejoicing as a freed hind. Then he foretells the joy which the Tribe shall express after its escape—"goodly words" he shall give forth. After it regains its liberty, the Tribe shall sing a Song of Praise.

The striking fulfillment of this prediction by our dying patriarch is seen in the victory of Barak, the great hero of this Tribe (see Judges 4:6), who, sent forth as a hind from its cover in the mountains of Galilee, came down Mount Tabor to face on foot the hosts of Sisera with his nine hundred chariots of iron. Barak, like a hind let loose, was at first timid of responding to Deborah's call. He had not dared to go forth with his little handful of men unless Deborah had sent for him and assured him of success. Read through Judges 4, and note the *hindlike swiftness* of his onslaught down the slopes of Tabor. It is significant that the name "Barak" means "lightning," and, like lightning he burst as a storm on the startled hosts of Sisera, which were scattered by the hand of God at his unexpected approach. (Note Judges 4:14). "So Barak went down from Mount Tabor, and ten thousand men *after* him," not "with him"—he running ahead of all!

The battle was not of Barak's choosing, rather was it forced upon him by Deborah. He was literally "sent forth" into the valley. (Note "sent" in Judges 5:15). In the heights of Tabor, Barak and his men were beyond the reach of Sisera's cavalry and chariots. But down in the valley, on foot, they would be like a herd of defenseless deer, unarmed, without either spear or shield, for attack or defense. (See Judges 5:8). In the defenselessness of Naphtali—deserted by their brethren (see Judges 5:15-18)—hemmed in by the hosts of the Canaanites, they were indeed a picture of helplessness. Nevertheless, the hand of the oppressor was broken. God interposed, and Naphtali was "*set free*," and the exuberance of their consequent joy found expression in the Song of Deborah and Barak recorded in Judges 5. *There* were the "goodly words" which Jacob had foretold. Thus Naphtali was a hind "let loose" in the *double* sense—"sent forth" by Deborah and "set free" from the yoke of the Canaanites by God!

But if this Tribe is interesting to us from its Old Testament association, it has far deeper interest for us from its New Testament connections. Zebulun and Naphtali were closely linked together, yet each had a separate interest. The land of Zebulun provided a "haven" of rest for the Lord Jesus during the first thirty years that He tabernacled among men; but it was in the bounds of Naphtali in the cities of Capernaum, Bethsaida, Chorazin, and other places, that He went about doing good and ministering the Word of Life. In His preaching of the Gospel to the poor were the "goodly words" of which Jacob spoke!

"Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall: The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him. But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob (from thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel); even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren" (Gen. 49:22-26).

These words of Jacob concerning Joseph are to be divided into two parts: what is said in Genesis 49:22-24 is mainly retrospective; what is recorded in Genesis 49:25, 26 is prospective. This appears from the change of tense: in the first part the verbs are in the past tense, in the second part they are in the future. As Jacob reviews the past he mentions three things in connection with his favorite son. Genesis 49:22 seems to view Joseph as a youth in his father's house, as an object of beauty, of tender care, and as well pleasing to his father's heart—all pictures under the beautiful figure of a "fruitful bough by a well." Next, Jacob refers to the bitter enmity and fierce hatred which were directed against him—the archers sorely grieved him; they shot at him their cruel arrows, they vented upon him their unreasonable spite. But through it all Joseph was Divinely sustained. The arms of the Eternal God were beneath him, and the Angel of the Lord encamped round about him. "His hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob."

Some have experienced difficulty with the wording of Genesis 49:24; even the translators do not appear to have been clear upon it. Inserting the word "is" in italics the verse as it stands in the Authorized Version reads as though it were a prediction concerning Christ. But many other plain Scriptures show that this is a mistake. The Messiah was not "from" the Tribe of Joseph, but came of the Tribe of Judah, just as Messianic prophecy declared He should. The little word "is" in italics should be omitted, and the verse punctuated thus—"His hands were made strong by the hands of the Mighty (One) of Jacob, from thence the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel." It was "from *thence*," *i.e.*, from the Shepherd and Stone of Israel, came all of Joseph's strength and blessing.

The prominent feature about this prophecy concerning Joseph is *fruitfulness*, and this received its fulfillment in the *double* Tribe which sprang from him—Ephraim and Manasseh, like two branches out of the parent stem. Joseph received a double portion in the land, *viz.*, the firstborn's "birthright," this being transferred to him from Reuben. (See 1 Chron. 5:1, 2). So, too, shall it be in the Millennium. Concerning the coming Kingdom, of which Ezekiel's closing chapters treat, we read: "Thus saith the Lord God, This shall be the border, whereby ye shall inherit the land according to the twelve tribes of Israel: *Joseph shall have two portions*" (Ezek. 47:13). It is noteworthy that "Ephraim" means "*fruitfulness*," and of Manasseh Jacob had predicted, "Let them grow into a *multitude* in the midst of the earth." Finally, it should be pointed out that Joshua was from one of the tribes which sprang from Joseph (Num. 13:8), and in him Jacob's prophecy concerning his favorite son received its main fulfillment.

"Benjamin shall raven as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil" (Gen. 49:27). What a striking evidence is this of the complete setting aside of the natural man by God! Surely it is clear that had Jacob followed the inclinations of his heart he would not have said *this* of Benjamin, his youngest and dearly loved son! But this divine prediction was unmistakably fulfilled as the Scriptures which bear upon this tribe plainly show.

Benjamin is here likened to a "wolf," which is noted for its swiftness and *ferocity*. Benjamin was the fiercest and most warlike of the tribes. For illustrations, note the following passages; Judges 19:16; 2 Samuel 2:15, 16: "Then there arose and went over by number, twelve of Benjamin, which pertained to Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David. And they caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow's side; so they fell down together" (See also 1 Chron. 8:40; 1 Chron. 12:2; 2 Chron. 17:17).

The heroes of this tribe were marked by fierceness and wolf-like treachery. *Ehud* was of this tribe. (Read Judges 3:15-22). *King Saul* was a Benjaminite. (Read 1 Samuel 22:17-20). Mark the *wolf* seizing the helpless sheep as recorded in 2 Samuel 4:1-6. *Saul of Tarsus*, who first persecuted the Church, was also of this Tribe (Rom. 11:1).

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Both ancient and present-day prophecy provide inspired foretelling of future events. There is a mysterious "something" built into each person, causing them to want to know the future. Ecclesiastes 3:11 tells us: "He (God) has made everything beautiful in its time. Also *He has put Eternity into their hearts*, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end." True prophecy, however, cannot be of any private interpretation, as Peter teaches us in 2 Pet. 1:20. Also the test for it being of God is that it must be fulfilled—it must come to pass (Ezek. 12:25-28). All the prophecy about our Lord Jesus Christ in the Word has either come to pass, or it *will* come to pass at the time appointed by God. Apart from these prophecies concerning Christ, no doubt the richest and purest of prophecy is contained in these predictions spoken by Jacob to his sons prior to his death, and their accuracy, not only for his sons, but for the history of Israel, is absolutely stunning in its being pristine and without error! **Here we ask you to write your own heartfelt comments regarding God's ways in His desiring to reveal to His own that which He will do (Deut. 29:29, Rom. 16:25, 26).**

**Is there any indication in scriptures of how the 12 tribes will be reassembled during the tribulation and millinium periods.**

**The Antichrist coming from the tribe of Dan may be a new concept to many and a stretching of what is presented in the Word but show how there may be a connection between Genesis 49:16-17 and Genesis 3:14-15.**

### **Genesis 50:1-26**

"And his brethren also went and fell before his face; and they said, Behold we be thy servants. And Joseph said unto them, Fear not; for (am) I in the place of God?" (50:18, 19). The prophetic dream of Joseph is realized. The brethren own Joseph's supremacy, and take the place of servants before him. So in the coming Day, all Israel shall fall down before the Lord Jesus Christ, and say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" (Isa. 25:9).

We close at the point from which we started. Joseph signifies "Addition," and Addition is Increase, and "increase" is the very word used by the Holy Spirit to describe the dominant characteristic of the Kingdom of Him whom Joseph so wondrously foreshadowed. "Of the *increase* of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His Kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever" (Isa. 9:7)

(Gleanings in Genesis, A. W. Pink)

Revelation 22:20-21: "He who testifies to these things says, "*Surely I am coming quickly.*" Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, Amen.